

Science and Mathematics Education Centre
Faculty of Humanities

**Longing to Belong: A Phenomenological Inquiry into
Enduring Effects of Cross-Cultural Life-World Transitions**

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Doctor of Philosophy
of
Curtin University

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DEDICATION

For my mother with love and heartfelt thanks for instilling in me a love of learning that has led to an insatiable thirst for knowledge and understanding.

Dla Mamy

DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by another person except where due acknowledgement has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) – updated March 2014. The proposed research study received human research ethics approval from the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00262), Approval Number # SMEC-74-11.

Signature: 

Date: 17 May 2018

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ABSTRACT

The diasporic movement of people has been common throughout history, including during recent times, resulting in the dislocation of millions of people from their place of birth due to factors such as war, conflicts, and social, political and economic disruptions. The outcomes are life changing for all family members but particularly poignant for children involved in the upheavals of change.

This research merges a phenomenological, hermeneutic, ethno-biographical and auto-biographical approach to explore the phenomenon of the cross-cultural childhood that the voluntary and involuntary relocation of people can cause. Through the consideration of narrative inquiry, we gain greater insights into the affective aspect of the cross-cultural childhood guided by the singular question, “How does it feel to have experienced a cross-cultural childhood?” Adopting the existential framework of temporality, spatiality, corporeality, relationality and materiality proposed by Les Todres, this inquiry examines the narrative life stories of three individuals who emigrated to Australia from Italy, South Korea and Scotland. I draw on my own lived experience as a first generation of Polish and Latvian descent following my parents’ diaspora to Australia as displaced persons after World War II, and braid my life narrative to interpret meaning and gain plausible insights.

An interactive multisensory exploration, this thesis uses technology to develop empathetic resonance through music that is interwoven with the text accessed through QR codes and hyperlinks to publicly available YouTube music clips. These help to marry our senses with thought and feeling, and head and heart much as Todres proposes. This research draws on the philosophical writings of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Max van Manen, Charles Taylor, Robert Sokolowski and Todres, and the work of leading authorities on the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon, David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken.

A depiction of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Chartres, France acts as a metaphor of this lived experience and provides an overview of this phenomenon. The life stories contained in this thesis reveal the effects of a cross-cultural childhood specific to each person within some commonalities. The themes of belonging and connectedness, identity, culture and language emerge as significant aspects of the cross-cultural childhood that are considered in this hermeneutic inquiry.

Longing emerges as a central emotion and theme in all the narratives including longing to belong, longing for the past, longing to find self, longing for language, and longing for cultural knowledge and maintenance. As the stories unfold it appears that a cross-cultural childhood creates a wound that, in time, offers great potential for personal growth and development. This thesis elucidates understanding that this wound is a part of our incompleteness as human beings and our human vulnerability. It surmises that the cross-cultural childhood experience can be emotional and challenging, and continues to have an effect on individuals throughout their lives, yet it can be an enriching one that may allow each person to find the treasure within themselves, others and the world.

The significance of this research is that it helps us to gain deeper insights into the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon leading to fullness of self-understanding for those of us who have had this lived experience, and greater understanding of others for those who have not had a cross-cultural childhood. This may be of particular interest to educators, health workers, social workers, counsellors and other researchers.

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LIST OF SONGS AND VIDEO CLIPS

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2. *The Partisan* by Leonard Cohen
3. *The Rivers of Babylon* by Boney M.
4. *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien* by Edith Piaf
5. *The Living Years* by Mike and the Mechanics
6. *My Way* by Andrea Bocelli
7. *The Colors of the Wind* by Vanessa Williams
8. *Mull of Kintyre* by Paul McCartney and Wings
9. *I'm Leaving on a Jet Plane* by Peter, Paul and Mary
10. *Drops of Jupiter (Tell Me)* by Train
11. *Anthem* by Leonard Cohen
12. *Frédéric Chopin Nocturne C sharp minor* by Arjen Seinen. From *The Pianist*

PROLOGUE

August 1981

A bag of fresh oranges and a leg of ham—the price of safe passage from one country to the next. “This is not the way it is done in Australia,” I think to myself, indignant at the officer’s search of the back of the car, and his careless disregard to my reaction as he helps himself without a word to the food on the back seat. You do not argue when you are far from home, certainly not with a border patrol officer wearing a military uniform and holding a machine gun on a lonely back road as the sun begins its downward journey to another destination. Even Checkpoint Charlie on the German border provided some measure of comfort because of the proximity to other people who were in the same position.

Fear. Will we make it out of here safely?

Compliance. Hand over the food intended for others that is more valuable than money in deprived countries.

Control. Do not lose your temper, hold your tongue and do as you are told.

Sorrow. Relinquish food that is so abundant back home that it often goes to waste, yet is not available to everyone, not even some of my relatives.

Relief. Our passports are returned to us and we cautiously drive off with our car weighing less than before.

Gratitude. We have survived a potentially dangerous border crossing.

Trepidation. We enter a country with an unfamiliar political regime.

Shaken by the encounter, I turn to face the road ahead distracted by the events that have just transpired. And then it happens! In the half light as the sun is setting, a twilight time that often stirs my soul and leaves me feeling anxious for no particular reason, I gasp at the sight ahead, now etched permanently in my mind like a picture postcard. The tall shimmering *brzozy* birch trees stand erect along the side of the road, as they have done for generations, the rustling of their leaves music to my ears as they twist and turn in the breeze. They are visions of natural beauty and simple splendour. Are these lofty trees straining to see the new arrivals in the late summer haze, the streams of light leaving their sunbeam imprints on the ground?

It is after my eyes adjust to the last rays of warm sunshine that I see it. It takes my breath away. A golden, dappled deer lightly steps out of the shadows. Soft paws materialise on a dirt road as this graceful native of the forest with its majestic crown of antlers steps onto the road, and seemingly purposefully stops in front of the car for the briefest of moments, looks me directly in the face and welcomes me 'home'. It then turns and walks off silently, leaving indelible footprints on my heart—a proud, magnificent creature of the woodland that somehow senses that this is a singular moment in my life. I am not even aware at the time that tears are streaming down my face.

I am home at last. Not the home associated with the conscious level of understanding founded in my mother's childhood narratives of her pre-World War II home in Poland, but a disconcerting sense of real home. It is an uncanny feeling of familiarity as if I have been here before. It is at the core of my being—I can feel it in every cell of my body. But how can this be? I have never been to Poland. Does this deer know something that I do not know?

It takes me another 25 years of searching to understand what that wise deer knew all those years ago about who I am, and why I am, the way I am.

I Am ... I Said, Neil Diamond



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxDyXK93o6g&sns=em>

L.A.'s fine, the sun shines most the time
And the feeling is "lay back"
Palm trees grow and rents are low
But you know I keep thinkin' about
Making my way back

Well I'm New York City born and raised
But nowadays
I'm lost between two shores
L.A.'s fine, but it ain't home
New York's home
But it ain't mine no more

"I am" ... I said
To no one there
And no one heard at all
Not even the chair
"I am" ... I cried
"I am" ... said I
And I am lost and I can't

Even say why
Leavin' me lonely still
Did you ever read about a frog
Who dreamed of bein' a king
And then became one
Well except for the names
And a few other changes
If you talk about me
The story is the same one

But I got an emptiness deep inside
And I've tried
But it won't let me go
And I'm not a man who likes to swear
But I never cared
For the sound of being alone

"I am" ... I said
To no one there
And no one heard at all
Not even the chair ...
And I am lost and I can't
Even say why ... "I am" ... I cried "I am"

The first time I heard this song written and recorded by Neil Diamond in 1971, the words “lost between two shores” caught my attention. Each time I hear the song it causes me to stop and reflect on my own background. The lyrics are aligned with my own personal experiences and feelings, as I too have felt lost between two shores—Poland, the country of my mother’s birth, and Australia, where I was born. Diamond described *I Am ... I Said* as an autobiographical song written at a time when he was trying to find himself after a difficult period in his life troubled by self-doubt. The song resonates with me as I have spent much of my life questioning who I am. The inner confusion and feelings that I have experienced because of my cross-cultural childhood are reflected in the lyrics of this song. I have shared the feeling of being lost and lonely without understanding the reason behind the feelings. I can relate to the emptiness, in the sense that I do

not feel complete—not having full knowledge of the history and culture of my parents’ countries and not having full knowledge of the culture of the country where I was born and raised.

The relevance of this song to this thesis is that it explores the concept of identity, one of the central themes that emerges in this inquiry. It reflects the importance of belonging and connectedness, the feeling of rootlessness or ‘emptiness’ that possibly can be attributed to being geographically uprooted, and the feeling of alienation. Diamond’s pensive look in the video is reminiscent of someone worried or contemplating a matter of solemn importance. Might we assume a person’s identity that is at the crux of who we are is of great significance to us as individuals?

Might we interpret the frequent repetition of the chorus and the tone in which it is sung as a question, or a plea for an answer, or even a plea for help rather than a statement? Perhaps “I am” can be interpreted as “Who am I?” While we may preoccupy ourselves with the question of who we are, can the song’s reference to the chair be interpreted as perhaps suggesting that it is of little significance to anyone else?

“I am” ... I said
To no one there
And no one heard at all
Not even the chair ...

Is our preoccupation about our own identity a waste of time? Are we acting in a self-interested manner by trying to define ourselves? Or is it a fundamental need that is necessary for our well-being so that we can take our place in the world and lead a fulfilling and rewarding life secure in the knowledge of who we are? This view seems to be supported by Les Todres in his exposition of narcissism in his book *Embodied Inquiry* as he discloses that, “The field of ‘me’ becomes a productive source of information and direction, and forms the basis of a degree of inner freedom and vitality ... called ‘healthy narcissism’” (2007, p. 153). While Diamond wrote this song during a personally challenging time, interestingly, he himself has experienced a cross-cultural childhood having been born in New York to Jewish immigrants from Poland. Although we do not know to what extent Diamond’s cross-cultural experience affects his concept of self, might we consider that this song reflects more than just a period of self-doubt related to his

career but also his place in the world as a person with a cross-cultural childhood? This song never ceases to make me reflect upon my cross-cultural childhood and its effect on me.

Chapter 1 - INTERPRETING NARRATIVES OF LIVED EXPERIENCES

This inquiry is borne of a deep desire to understand and shed insights into the phenomenon of a cross-cultural childhood. It arises from a lifetime of perceived difference, of somehow feeling apart from others, and not fully belonging, despite having many friends and a wide social circle. This feeling of estrangement and isolation is rooted in my personal experience as a first-generation Australian of Central European descent. I recognise that in this, I am not unique. It is an experience that has been shared by countless people throughout history and continues to form the lived experience of millions of people around the world today, either through choice or circumstance.

The widespread nature of a cross-cultural childhood provides relevance and validity to this thesis and is one of the reasons that prompted me to undertake this inquiry. I endeavour, through this inquiry, to foster insights into, and a greater appreciation of this phenomenon for those who have not experienced a cross-cultural childhood, and hope that those of us who have shared this lived experience may gain an enhanced understanding of ourselves and our experiences.

I am driven by a compelling urge to explore the affective aspect of this experience. If there is a singular question that guides my inquiry it can be expressed as, “How does it feel to have experienced a cross-cultural childhood?” As Todres explores Martin Heidegger’s notion of *befindlichkeit* “how one finds oneself” he writes that “feeling is a form of understanding” (2007, p. 17). This research incorporates the concept of embodied inquiry that Todres claims “marries thought and feeling, ‘head’ and ‘heart’” (p. 175). He goes on to tell us that by trying to put

experiences into words we can “re-present and evoke the presence of human phenomena” that can “lead to an empathetic understanding of both the details and the sense of the phenomenon as palpable and alive” (p. 183).

I anticipate that by exploring the life stories uncovered by my research we can gain plausible insights into the phenomenon of a cross-cultural childhood experience and deeper perspectives about individual experiences. My thesis endeavours to develop empathetic resonance through the understanding of the feelings associated with a cross-cultural childhood. I am encouraged by Chris Lawn’s exposition of the writings of Hans-Georg Gadamer in which he states that, “words represent states of mind and communicate descriptions of mental states, moods, emotions and feelings” (2006, p. 77).

In seeking to comprehend the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon I have merged a phenomenological, hermeneutic, ethno-biographical and auto-ethnographical approach into my research of embodied inquiry, following a human science rather than a behavioural science approach, by examining the phenomenon of the cross-cultural childhood and interpreting its effect on people. This work draws deeply on the writings of Todres, Gadamer, Max van Manen, Robert Sokolowski and Charles Taylor. It also draws on the work of David Pollock and Ruth Van Reken, who are recognised as leading authorities on the concept of Third Culture Kids (TCKs) first proposed by John and Ruth van Eusem in the 1950s. A TCK is described as,

a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture. The TCK frequently builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture may be assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background. (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 13)

Their work identifies many of the common characteristics, responses, benefits and challenges of a cross-cultural childhood. My research takes an alternative approach by hermeneutically delving more deeply into, and interpreting, how it *feels* to be a person with a cross-cultural childhood to illuminate our understanding of the effects it has on people and the way they live their lives. It is a process of self-discovery as I gain greater consciousness and understanding of myself that is reflected in the comment by Dwayne Donald (2011) that,

hermeneutics works to interpret and give voice to the difficulty and ambiguousness of life itself. The hermeneutic call to immerse oneself in the complexities and ambiguities of a given situation or context of engagement requires deep attentiveness to the centrality of history, culture, tradition, and philosophy in producing standpoints of interpretation. It is a provocative call to come to better understand the ‘fix we are in’ that eschews foreclosure and conclusion. (p. 19)

Music is my passion. It speaks to my heart and affords a powerful mode of expression and means to develop empathy that words alone cannot. In perhaps original ways, my thesis is infused with songs and music videos that are publicly available on YouTube. They are intertwined with my writing. My thesis delivers a multisensory experience using technology to foster understanding and evoke emotions through the medium of selected contemporary and classical music. The reader is encouraged to pause and take the time to listen, and to reflect on the music in this thesis to gain a fuller appreciation and deeper understanding of the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon by engaging the senses, the heart and the mind.

The reader is invited to use an electronic device such as a mobile phone or tablet with a Quick Response (QR) scanner to read the codes included in my thesis that link to videos and songs. Alternatively, clicking on the hyperlink in the text or typing it into a web browser will access the video clip and song although it may be necessary to click a “Skip Ad” button if an advertisement appears.

The musical pieces and videos have been selected because of the relevance of their lyrics and their connection with the life narratives contained in this thesis, their oral and visual imagery, and their musical arrangements. The words of the song that are publicly available on the Internet appear below the QR code. A written explanation is provided about each musical piece and the reason I selected it. Interestingly, a number of the singer-songwriters and composers like Neil Diamond, Leonard Cohen, and Frédéric Chopin experienced a cross-cultural childhood. The music and videos help to reveal the life stories contained in this narrative in a creative and imaginative way that explores the concepts and emotions to find meaning and deepen our understanding, because as van Manen asserts, “over the ages, human beings have invented artistic, philosophic, communal, mimetic and poetic languages that have sought to (re)unite them with the ground of their lived experience” (1990, p. 9). He insists that, “artists are involved in

giving shape to their lived experience, the products of art are, in a sense, lived experiences, transferred into transcendental configurations” (1990, p. 74). Eva Hoffman shares a view of music as a source of understanding in her book *Lost in Translation*.

Music—philosophers have known its dangers—inspires me with such grandeur that I think I know what inspiration is about. As I progress to pieces by Mozart or Chopin or Beethoven, I begin to feel in possession of enormous, oceanic passions—anger and love and joy and grief that surpass merely being angry, or happy, or sad. “I know how anyone in the world feels,” I confide in Marek once. “Anyone at all ... If I can express the passions contained within a Beethoven sonata or a Chopin Berceuse, then I know everything about being human. Music is a wholly adequate language of the self—my self, everyone’s self. (1989, p. 71)

My thesis unfolds with a description of my historicity and my personal narrative to orientate the reader to the cross-cultural childhood experience. The Prologue provides an account of an intensely emotional personal experience as I visit my mother’s homeland for the first time. In Chapter 2, I explore my lived experiences and how I find myself living in a cross-cultural world because, as van Manen writes, “we are born into stories: including the stories of family, community and nation” (1990, p. 252). As I retrace my family and personal history, I reflect on the extent to which they are inextricably linked and how the past continues to resonate in my present and shape my future on a personal and professional level. Celeste Snowber discloses that, “There is an art to listening to our lives. Research is not only an outward endeavour, but it travels in the realm of re-searching our own lives, knowledge, passions and practice” (2005, p. 346).

Chapter 3 was inspired by my time in Chartres, France. The Notre Dame Cathedral of Chartres is an historic monolith of great beauty and splendour that dominates the local landscape and is a spiritual centre that resonates with my own spirituality. I was moved by its antiquity, architecture, and spiritual relevance and visited the Cathedral several times during my visit. On each occasion, I was touched by the Cathedral’s beauty and discovered new secrets of the ‘lived experience’ of the Cathedral that led me to draw analogies between the features of the Cathedral and the cross-cultural childhood experience.

Not dissimilar to a person who has experienced a cross-cultural childhood, the Cathedral contains diverse and contrasting elements that create its wholeness. Built and rebuilt over hundreds of years, the Cathedral becomes a metaphor of the cross-cultural experience. In this chapter, my description of the features of the Cathedral draws parallels with aspects of a cross-cultural childhood that helps to situate some of the themes contemplated in this inquiry and that can be borne in mind as the narratives unfold.

The following three chapters consist of the narrative life stories of three people who emigrated separately to Australia. The suitability of using narratives is highlighted in Jerome Bruner's comment, "We seem to have no other ways of describing 'lived time' save in the form of a narrative" (2004, p. 692) while recognising that life stories are influenced by cultural, interpersonal and linguistic factors (p. 264). I feel a deep sense of moral obligation to re-tell the stories faithfully as they were disclosed to me, recognising that narratives are "a selective achievement of memory" (p. 693) and shaped by my interpretation as a listener. Bruner goes on to suggest that, "a life as led is inseparable from a life as told—or more bluntly, a life is not "how it was" but how it was interpreted and reinterpreted, told and retold ... " (p. 708).

Carl Leggo (2012) reminds us that, "Life is abundant, and narrative inquiry is a way of focusing on some particulars of that abundance in order to recognize some of the possibilities of meaning that lie always in the seemingly tangle messiness of lived experiences ... Stories need to be told in creative ways that hold our attention, that call out to us, that startle us, so we know our stories and the stories of others with renewed attention" (p. xiii). In extending this concept, he goes on to cite novelist Margaret Atwood (2002) who "wisely suggested that 'writing has to do with darkness, and a desire or perhaps a compulsion to enter it, and, with luck, to illuminate it, and to bring something back out to the light'" (p. xix).

I am extremely humbled and grateful to these persons for opening their hearts to me as they share intimate details of their cross-cultural childhood experiences, some of which they have never shared before with anyone. This type of research requires a special relationship between the researcher and participant. Drawing on my skills as a researcher, I strive to create a safe and supportive environment that fosters dialogue that is reflected in the willingness of the participants to confide in me and share their life stories in an open manner within an atmosphere

of trust and mutual respect. The participants gain a sense of being genuinely listened to and heard by someone who has shared a similar lived experience that leads to a greater fullness of self-understanding. Todres suggests that this “opens up a view of human existence that lies between great freedom and great vulnerability within the spiritual realm of embodied inquiry and understanding” (2007, p. 3). With their permission, I strive to re-tell their stories in an accurate, honest and insightful manner so that other people can gain a greater appreciation of the effects of a cross-cultural childhood, while cognisant that Gadamer views “all writing is a kind of alienated speech, and its signs need to be transformed back into speech and writing” (1989, p. 393).

As the narratives unfold, they lead to interpretive questions of inquiry that come to mind and van Manen calls our “inner speech ... what goes on when we seem to be thinking aloud in our head” (2016, p. 364). They are not necessarily answerable by us or by the people telling their stories. These questions are posed in the narratives to stimulate our thinking, develop empathy and gain a greater appreciation of how it feels to have experienced a cross-cultural childhood. In the spirit of fidelity, in re-telling the stories in this way, as listener I acknowledge my interpretive role and mostly suspend hermeneutic interpreting until Chapters 7 and 8 in which I compare the life stories and my own, identify and expand upon common themes and differences, and enfold understandings offered to me in other scholarly writings.

The stories resonate deeply with my personal life story and lived experiences, and as my own narrative progresses and reveals meaning from these narratives, they help to scaffold our insights and deepen our understanding of the textures of this lived experience. My personal experiences are accessible to me in a unique way because they are specific to me and provide the foundation for my reflections. I have striven to be faithful to the projects that animate my existence, faithful to the facts, faithful to myself as author of my own history and faithful to the sources from which I have drawn (Lucas, 2015, p. 235). I use an intersubjective approach and contemplate my own lived experiences as an observer of my own life—suspending intentionalities, in keeping with what Sokolowski describes as a “phenomenological attitude” (2000, p. 48) “in order to develop a dialogic relation with the phenomenon, and thus validate the phenomenon” (van Manen, 1990, p. 11).

In this inquiry, I braid my own lived experience in the knowledge that, “the act of writing autobiographically offers equally potent occasions for enlarging empathy and imagination, and expanding knowledge about self and other” (Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers & Leggo, 2009, p. 29). My life stories add authenticity to these experiences and I use these stories “to generate, represent and critique knowledge through writing and braiding autobiographical texts” (van Manen, 1990, p. 34) that can be described as a “métissage” (Hasebe-Ludt et al., 2009, p. 35).

Lawn’s exposition of Gadamer reminds us that, “Understanding is always the fusion of ... horizons” (2006, p. 66) although our unconscious prejudices of our own horizons may influence the interpretation. However, “Truth, whatever it is, can only emerge from dialogue” (p. 71). It is what Sokolowski calls “double disclosure” involving reciprocity between speakers, in this case the person telling their life story and myself (2008, p. 68). Robert Dostal reminds us that we should strive for authentic conversations, “‘a letting it happen’ for which attention, mental concentration and linguistic skill are required” (2002, p. 108).

It is a joint-referencing based on reciprocity, reflexivity or ongoing self-narration, and self-reference. Bonnie Litowitz cautions us to remember that misinterpretation is inevitable and that, “Our subjectivity is [thus] constituted through dialogue” (2014, p. 301). We also must acknowledge our capacity for self-deception as “an adaptation to ensure survival [and] ... the nature of deception will vary depending on the affordances of the communicational system” (p. 306). Adopting the hermeneutics of restoration or faith, I listen, absorb and respect the stories that are shared with me. I give voice to the “Hopes, dreams, memories, fantasies, intentions, representation of others and time [that] are all interwoven, into a fabric that people experience—and can tell as a life story” (Josselson, 2004, p. 2).

This inquiry is supplemented by drawing on the written biographies and life stories of fictional and non-fictional people, and conversations with others who have experienced a cross-cultural childhood. It is a process that Evgenia Cherkasova calls “side shadowing” and a “creative play with possibilities and impossibilities” (Carel & Gamez, 2004, p. 201). To enrich my reflections, I draw on the biographical writings of Barrack Obama, Anita Heiss and Hoffman, and fictional characters such as Anna in the 2008 book *Whatever Happened to Anna K.* by Irina Reyn. Themes such as belonging, identity, culture and language come to the fore as the stories

unfold and collectively these narratives help to illuminate our understanding of the cross-cultural childhood.

Chapter 4 pivots on the story of Mario who emigrates from Italy to Australia with his family when he is a young boy. In this narrative inquiry, we discover Mario's search for identity and how he reconciles the two strong cultural influences that shape the man that he becomes because of his lived experiences. Our hearts are touched by the challenges he and his family encounter as they settle into their new country, developing our empathetic resonance that guides the momentum of this inquiry. We share his disappointment when he returns to visit his country of birth only to find that things have changed, leading him to the realisation that he too has changed. We learn that throughout his life Mario devotes considerable thought and energy to finding himself and creating a haven at home where he can bring all the elements of himself together to create a sense of wholeness (Rousseau, 2004, p. 88; Todres, 2007, p. 175).

Chapter 5 follows the life story of Holly who leaves South Korea without her family at the age of 11 to live as an international student in India and later, Australia. We see her embrace diversity and immerse herself in local cultures while adapting and modifying her perception of self during these experiences. This inquiry combines a socio-structural and sociolinguistic approach that not only focuses on the biographical aspects of Holly's life in different social contexts but also examines her personality and identity construction (Alasuutari in Lieblich & Josselson, 1997, pp. 1-3). In this chapter, we examine the effect of adolescence on a cross-cultural childhood and discover the life path that Holly chooses to follow as a result of her experiences, as well as her fears and hopes for the future. It is a life story that reveals Holly's inner strength, determination and adaptability, the development of her social conscience, and the impact of a cross-cultural childhood.

This chapter is followed by the life story of Mairie (pronounced Varey), a reluctant immigrant, who emigrated with her family from Scotland to Australia at the start of her adolescence. Chapter 6 describes Mairie's response and resistance to the news that her family is emigrating to Australia, her intense negative feelings about leaving Scotland, and the pain of loss and separation that appears to leave a permanent presence in her heart. The importance of community ties and a sense of belonging are revealed through Mairie's narrative. We reflect on

her difficulty in adjusting to her new environment because of these factors and examine the importance of reconciliation to achieving wholeness and establishing a new life in Australia.

I am drawn to the poignancy of these stories and their correlation with my own life, and my feelings and responses. As each story unfolds we develop empathy and discover that each person's story is personal and unique within the existential themes that, "pervade the life worlds of all human beings"—lived space, lived body, lived time, and lived human relations (van Manen, 1990, p. 10). Todres tells us that, "This is a holistic and immediate way of knowing" since it "is not just something that happens 'inside' oneself but is something that tells us how we are in relation to things around us" (2004, p. 177).

Heinz Kohut is helpful in describing empathy as, "vicarious introspection [and as] ... the capacity to think and feel oneself into the inner life of another person" that he considers to be "an essential ingredient of human life" (1982 in Hummel, 2001, p. 67). Christina Hinton sheds further light on this view in "Cosmopolitan education: Building on a biological inclination for care in a globalised world" as she explores research that supports the view that babies are born with "evolutionary endowed empathy" (2012, p. 413).

Chapters 7 and 8 draw the aforementioned reflections together and examine the key themes that emerge from this inquiry of a cross-cultural childhood experience as having influenced each person. As we understand the concepts of longing and belonging that constitute the title of my thesis, they illuminate our understanding of how it feels to live as a person who has experienced a cross-cultural childhood.

The final section of my thesis comprises an Epilogue that counterpoises the Prologue by recounting my intense personal reaction and emotions as I depart from my mother's homeland after my most recent visit to Poland. It affords further insight into the guiding question of this inquiry, "How does it feel to have had a cross-cultural childhood?"

The importance of this inquiry is that it helps to illuminate our understanding of how it feels to live as a person who has experienced a cross-cultural childhood. It allows us to become more

aware of, and sensitive to, the experiences and feelings of these persons. It can inform the way that we respond to and interact with others—as educators working with children, young people, and adults in an education setting, in workplaces that increasingly involve working with people from different cultural backgrounds, and in our personal interactions with people with a cross-cultural childhood—supporting the development of positive and constructive relationships for the benefit of all people.

The Participants

Three people participate in this research providing the reflective data for the inquiry. They were selected from my personal and professional network and are known to me as having experienced a cross-cultural childhood. In seeking to gain broad perspectives into this phenomenon, factors taken into consideration in selecting these people included their age and country of birth. The participants range in age from 18-70 years of age and emigrated to Australia from Italy, South Korea and Scotland—providing global insights from people from Europe, Asia and the United Kingdom. This purposefully ensures a variety of cultures are represented that is significant in this inquiry given the cross-cultural nature of this phenomenon. The narratives of the people from Europe help to reveal that even people from culturally similar backgrounds can experience a range of emotions due to cross-cultural life-world transitions.

As I researcher I acknowledge the limitations of my research and that there are other groups of people that could have been included in this inquiry, including Indigenous Australians who experience the enduring effects of cross-cultural transitions because of the colonisation of Australia. The narrative stories of refugees who have sought asylum in Australia often in dangerous and life-threatening situations also can yield valuable insights. These are worthy of more detailed inquiry and hermeneutic interpretation beyond the scope of this research. Similarly, the narrative inquiries of people who emigrated to Australia from the Middle East and Africa could shed further insights into the enduring effects of cross-cultural life-world transitions by people of different races and religious beliefs. This is echoed by Nicholas Ng-A-Fook (2017) in his paper “Poeticizing A Story of Asylum: Refugees, Refuge and Refuse” as he discusses Carol

Lee's article "No Return" that he describes as "Her critical call for the arts, the call for us to contemplate and reconsider the lived experiences of "refugees"" (p. 2).

I first discussed this research with the people involved during a face-to-face conversation at which time I provided details of the inquiry and invited them to ask questions. Participation in this inquiry was voluntary. A personal invitation was extended formally to each person in writing, in the form of a letter that outlined the purpose of the inquiry and the participant's role. The letter included an assurance of confidentiality. Participants signed a consent form confirming their understanding of the research process including the right to withdraw at any time, and stating their willingness to participate in this inquiry. A pseudonym is used for each person to provide anonymity and protect the participants' confidentiality. The pseudonyms were carefully selected to be culturally appropriate for each person. They were designed to create a sense of authenticity for the fictitious names of the otherwise honest accounts of the individual life stories. All data was stored securely.

Mario is a married man in his 40s living in Adelaide with his wife and two children. He emigrates from Italy with his parents and sister. His first career is in finance in which he works as an accountant for ten years before undertaking further study. At the time of this research, Mario is a teacher at a school where I am working and until the time of our conversation, we have limited contact due to our different roles. Mario speaks English fluently and has a basic command of the Italian language.

Holly, at the time of our conversation, has just turned 18 years of age and is about to graduate from a high school in Adelaide where she has been a boarding student for several years. Originally, from South Korea she moves to India as an international student for one year before relocating to Adelaide. Holly's English language skills are limited when she first arrives in Australia and she requires additional language tuition until her communication ability allows her to express herself independently. After her graduation, she plans to return to South Korea for a gap year before moving to England to commence her tertiary studies.

Màirie, who was born in Scotland, emigrated to Australia with her parents, and her elder brother and his family, and now works as an educational consultant. Her recollections of her childhood and emigration suggest she is a sensitive and independent person who is well liked and has a strong sense of belonging in Scotland.

Data

I conducted individual discussions with each person on several separate occasions. The conversations were conducted in Adelaide and Hobart, Australia. They were held in a private meeting room with the interviews totalling approximately four to six hours per person over time. Using a narrative inquiry approach, I invited each person to recollect his or her life story prompted by several questions prepared in advance to stimulate reflection and discussion. The questions covered the person's life experiences from their childhood in their country of birth to the time of our conversation.

As a researcher and an active participant in this narrative inquiry, I posed additional questions as required during the conversation to clarify details, confirm understanding, or further delve into a theme that emerged during the discussion. Ruthellen Josselson writes that, "The art of research practice here in part lies in producing a genuine personal encounter between interviewer and interviewee so that the possibilities are maximized that the interviewee will reveal meanings that are central, important and authentic" (2004, p. 7). Some of the questions that I posed were:

- I understand that you have had a cross-cultural childhood. What was it like growing up in your country of birth?
- Why did you leave the country where you were born?
- What do you remember about leaving your homeland?
- What was it like settling into your new life in a new country—at home, at school?
- What were some of the challenges that you faced as you were growing up in Australia?
- How do you think this experience affected you as you were growing up, and the person you are today?
- Where do you feel most comfortable or 'at home'?

I entered written notes into a journal of the reflections of each person's life story using a Smart Pen. With the permission of each person, the conversations were recorded on the Smart Pen. This allowed me to review the discussions after our conversations and use reflective techniques that yielded valuable insights into plausible understandings of this phenomenon. Adopting Gadamer's view that "language stands at the center of philosophical hermeneutics" (Dostal, 2002, p. 102), importance was placed on careful and considered interpretation.

Every effort has been made to re-tell these narratives in an authentic manner with a great sense of moral and ethical responsibility. Josselson writes in "The Hermeneutics of Faith and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion" that,

From the point of view of the hermeneutics of restoration, we, as researchers, believe that the participants are telling us, as best they are able, their sense of their subjective experience and meaning-making. We begin ... with an effort to believe that the person under scrutiny believes what he or she says. We adopt what may be considered to be a humanistic attitude and construe our task as trying to represent to ourselves and the readers of our work, clearly and accurately, the message our participants are trying to convey to us. (2004, p. 1)

As I listen to the narratives to glean some understanding of the reactions and emotions experienced by these persons, I draw on my own sense of empathy to seek plausible insights into the affective aspects of a cross-cultural childhood. In his exposition of Gadamer's work Dostal writes that self-regarding or the "experience of the thou claims an empathy with others that presumes to understand them better than they understand themselves" (2002, p. 92). Similarly, Norman Holland validates this technique in his discussion of the search by psychologists to uncover pathological truths by stating, "examining empirical data via empathy from as many viewpoints as he can discover; by singling out the specific empathetic stance [that] allows him to see the data in the most meaningful way" (1978, p. 145).

This thesis uses UK English spelling. Words in other languages are written in italics with their English translation included in the text. Quotations by persons who shared their narratives and scholarly references are included in quotation marks in the text or appear as indented paragraphs. Song lyrics are included below the QR code and hyperlink, and appear as indented verses.

I begin my narrative inquiry in the next chapter with a description of my historicity and personal cross-cultural journey to situate some of the concepts that emerge in this thesis and to add veracity by correlating my life story with the narratives of the persons who are the focus of this inquiry.

Chapter 2 – A CROSS-CULTURAL JOURNEY

The Baltic Bowerbird: A fusion of past and present

As I sit writing on the island of Naxos I am surrounded by Italian and Scandinavian holidaymakers basking in the summer sunshine on the picturesque Greek island. The stunning beaches with their glistening water, the whitewashed houses, the cobbled streets and the warmth of the Greek people draw me back to this part of the world time and time again. I feel completely at home without understanding the languages being spoken or knowing anyone. I feel like I am one of them—European. I feel like I belong here. Surely whoever looks at me can discern that I am European. But no-one seems to notice my Slavic features and there are no Polish speaking people here so they do not realise that I am European too. They hear me speak English. Some recognise my accent and ask if I am Australian. Others just smile or ignore me, viewing me as an outsider, yet I feel like an insider. Although, perhaps I am an interloper as I attempt to strike up a conversation and seek to fit in. Do they view me as an interloper or outsider who, according to the Collins dictionary, has “come into a situation or a place where they are not wanted or do not belong”?

My close friend Debbie from the United States repeatedly tells me she is certain that a shiny piece of paper dropped into my pram when I was a baby and imprinted on my infant brain, resulting in a lifelong passion for the shimmering aesthetics. She believes this is the reason I am attracted to shiny things. It reflects my penchant for crystal, jewellery, and evening clothes and accessories that sparkle. My husband calls me a jackdaw, a bowerbird. These comments and similar ones by other friends in Australia once caused me to feel self-conscious about my choices. It was my Finnish friend Raija who helped me not to feel that way and to better understand myself. When shopping for Christmas gifts together in Oulu, Finland she said to me as I picked up another crystal bauble, “You have such Baltic taste”. At last, I thought, someone sees me for who I am—a European. The connection between me and my desire for shiny design

was perhaps an evolutionary artefact, and not some tawdry obsession. I felt she had given me the greatest compliment, whereas it always felt like my other friends were being critically judgemental about my preferences. She unwittingly gave me permission to be myself and not to feel the need to justify my choices to other people. Offhand comments and other people's perceptions of my preferences and behaviour have provided the fragments from which I have constructed my own identity.

Pollock and Van Reken (2009, p. 95) and Rosalyn Ezra (2003, p. 127) tell us that people with a cross-cultural childhood are interested, and keen to experience and engage with other cultures. In my case this is reflected in my choice of employment, friends, travels, music, literature, movies, love of languages, and even my sense of style and dress. My viewing preferences for television at home sees me generally tune into SBS, the Special Broadcasting Service, whose government mandate is to reflect Australia's multicultural society, summed up in their tagline "Six billion stories and counting". I am fascinated by the news and stories of people and places around the world and wonder why that is the case. Perhaps we can find plausible insights into the reasons for this by reflecting upon my personal cross-cultural journey.

I was born in Adelaide, the capital city of South Australia. My birthplace was more by circumstance than design with my parents joining the diaspora of millions of other displaced persons from Europe following the end of World War II, in search of peace, stability, and a place to rebuild their lives. The concept of diaspora has its etymological origin from the Greek word *διασπορά* meaning "to sow or scatter seeds" (Brazier & Mannur, 2003, p. 65). It describes the movement of people who are scattered from one geographical location, usually from the land of their birth, to another place often through migration or exile. It is an ancient concept with Biblical records tracing the movement and exile of the Jewish people in the time before the birth of Christ.

Although there are various reasons for diasporas including colonisation, and trade and labour migrations, commonly it is associated with involuntary movements and displacement due to war and conflict as well as social, political and economic causes. These movements often evoke feelings of loss, sadness, nostalgia, dislocation, alienation and disengagement. The United Nations refugee agency estimates that there were 65.6 million refugees and internally displaced

people at the start of 2018 (UNHCR, 2018). There have been many waves of diaspora in history that have become more frequent and complex in recent years including the Jewish diaspora in the 3rd Century, the Black African diaspora in the 16th Century and generations of Chinese, Irish, Romanian and Russian diasporas (Brazier & Mannur, 2003, pp. 69-83).

Paradoxically, as I sit in the usually tranquil, sun-filled Naxos, there is a daily influx of refugees from the Middle East attempting a potentially dangerous boat journey from Turkey across the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas in an effort to reach Western Europe through Greece. Most recently in the 21st Century, the Iranian and Syrian diasporas of refugees seeking asylum in other countries have resulted in large scale modern day humanitarian crises with global impacts. The exiled have been blamed for the rise of nationalistic and fundamentalist movements as well as influencing the outcome of the United Kingdom's 2016 public referendum, the so-called "Brexit", the controversial decision by Britain to exit the European Union. The referendum result has been attributed in part to the negative impact of the influx of migrants in recent years.

Indeed, "The migratory spaces traversed by migrants or refugees in a few decades mark diasporic zones that deterritorialize and reterritorialize the increasingly blurred borders of nations and nation-states" (Brazier & Mannur, 2003, p. 292). Intriguingly, technological developments have resulted in new forms of diaspora. Recent creations of virtual worlds have led to the theorisation of cyber-diasporas as migration to virtual worlds and the creation of diasporic communities without people even leaving home through online role-playing games like World of Warcraft (Herrera, Margitay-Bechtand & Chagas, 2009).

World War II resulted in the heartbreaking loss of my grandmother during a German attack on my mother's village in Poland and the loss of the family home. It was burnt to the ground by soldiers in the dark of the night on 29 March, 1944 in retribution for the attacks by Partisans hiding in the nearby forest. After the attack, my mother was dispatched by train that same night, with a loaf of bread under her arm, to Germany where she worked as enforced farm labour for several years. 74 years later my mother's involuntary tears still fall as she recollects that fateful night that cruelly robbed her of her mother, her family and her youth—pain so great that no quantity of tears or time can wash it away. As I listen to the stories and watch the tears fall, I feel helpless because the past cannot be undone. I marvel at my mother's fortitude and resilience.

How does a person find the will to live, love and laugh again after such a trauma? How does the human spirit rise to face another day when it has been so profoundly wounded?

The Partisan, Leonard Cohen



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S34cVkJ6zCE&sns=em>

When they poured across the border
I was cautioned to surrender
This I could not do
I took my gun and vanished.

I have changed my name so often
I've lost my wife and children
But I have many friends
And some of them are with me

An old woman gave us shelter
Kept us hidden in the garret
Then the soldiers came
She died without a whisper

There were three of us this morning
I'm the only one this evening
But I must go on
The frontiers are my prison

Oh, the wind, the wind is blowing
Through the graves the wind is blowing
Freedom soon will come
Then we'll come from the shadows

Les Allemands étaient chez moi / The Germans were at my house
Ils me dirent, "résigne toi" / They tell me, "Give yourself up"
Mais je n'ai pas peur / But I am not afraid
J'ai repris mon âme / I claimed my soul

J'ai changé cent fois de nom / I have changed names a hundred times
J'ai perdu femme et enfants / I have lost wife and children
Mais j'ai tant d'amis / But I have so many friends
J'ai la France entière / I have all of France

Un vieil homme dans un grenier / An old man in an attic
Pour la nuit nous a caché / Hid us for the night
Les Allemands l'ont pris / The Germans captured him
Il est mort sans surprise / He died without surprise

Oh, the wind, the wind is blowing
Through the graves the wind is blowing
Freedom soon will come
Then we'll come from the shadows

The Partisan is performed by my favourite singer-songwriter, the late Leonard Cohen, whom I saw perform this song both in France and Australia. The first time I heard *The Partisan*, it immediately moved me and touched my heart. It reminded me of the attack on my mother's village resulting in the tragic loss of my grandmother, Marianna Hurkała, in World War II, and the displacement of my mother from Poland. Partisans were a significant force of resistance against the German Nazis during World War II. They were perceived as freedom fighters who,

as an unofficial army of untrained fighters, took up arms to fight against the occupation in France and other European countries. They included men and women from all walks of life who left their homes and families and went into hiding. They played a key role in the outcome of World War II and wars in other countries (Black, 2003). The song is based on a poem called *La complainte du partisan*, 'The Partisan's Lament', written in 1943 during the occupation of France by a soldier of the Free French Forces, Emmanuel D'Astier de la Vigerie.

Nearby to my mother's village was a dense forest where a group of Partisans was thought to be hiding. Without warning, my mother, her family and all the other people in the village were woken by German soldiers in the middle of the night, marshalled out of their homes and herded together into an open courtyard in the centre of the village. The soldiers proceeded to set fire to the houses and systematically shoot the villagers. During the attack and massacre of innocent people, one of the German commanders proclaimed over a loudspeaker that if the Partisans came to defend the villagers, they would kill every person in the village. My mother and her family lay on the ground waiting to be shot when another officer ordered the massacre to stop. My mother was spared but my grandmother who tried to run back to her burning house was killed. Today, in the former village of Pardasówka there is a monument to commemorate the site of the killings. Those alive today who witnessed and survived the attack remember that the ground was moving and undulating as the German soldiers buried alive the wounded and dying people.

The haunting music of this song causes a physical reaction in me. It brings shivers to my body as it reminds me of the horror of that fateful night. The strumming of the guitar as it builds intensity resonates in me like the beat of a military drum. It prompts within me visions of the marching, approaching soldiers as they come closer and closer to the village and generates a sense of fear and trepidation. It feels like the guitar is tugging at my heartstrings. It always evokes my grandmother's image with the words, "The old woman gave us shelter ... she died without a whisper". I have stood at my grandmother's grave in Poland set among the graves of others who lost their lives that night and the chorus is particularly poignant and heart wrenching for me.

The wind, the wind is blowing,
through the graves,
the wind is blowing,
freedom soon will come,

then we'll come from the shadows

The song speaks of defiance and courage and describes the personal costs for the Partisans. "I have lost my wife and family, but I have many friends" and, the ultimate sacrifice, "There were three of us this morning, I am the only one this evening but I must go on". The stirring images in the video remind us of the reality of the horror, pain and destruction of war. This song has become for me, a homage to my grandmother and a moving anthem for the eternal longing and fight for freedom by those oppressed. Cohen was a Canadian Jew and this song must have had special significance for him because of the persecution of Jewish people in World War II.

My mother's loss and pain reverberate through the generations in what we may view as intergenerational post-traumatic stress disorder. Possible psychological and physical responses in successive generations can include anger, aggression, anxiety, headaches, breathing difficulties, intrusive imagery, heightened sense of vulnerability, difficulty trusting others and emotional numbing (Brown, 2016). As a young child growing up in Adelaide, I was not immune to this vulnerability and anxiety. I would go to bed in fear of soldiers coming into our house and dragging me out of bed in the middle of the night. The fear was so great that I would place a pile of clothes at the end of my bed before I went to sleep in case our home was attacked. I did not want to spend the imagined war in my pyjamas and I always packed a warm jumper so I would not be cold. I never told anyone about my bedtime ritual and no-one noticed. I eventually overcame this fear but the memory of it is reinforced by my mother regularly reliving stories with accounts of the events of the war. As Amia Lieblich and Josselson suggest,

Above all, one's own life history should be considered as developing against a backdrop of the family history active over several generations. In our own lives, we not only solve current problems, but also take on family delegations from our parents' generation ... We are unknowingly driven on by them and are often invisibly blocked by them. (1997, p. 24)

Immigration has been significant for many highly developed countries since World War II. Both Australia and Canada have adopted a pluralist model of migration characterised by acceptance of immigrants based on an inclusionary principle that offers access to civic and political rights that has benefitted my family. After the war, emigrating to Australia was a last-

minute, serendipitous, decision for my mother. She discloses to us that the queue to sign up for passage to Australia was shorter than the queues to Canada and the United States. We may consider this to be a curious reason for such a life-changing decision. Perhaps we can interpret it in terms of the existential theme of the lived body that had lived through so much. Perhaps it resulted in a disassociation with self and lived place that she really did not care where she lived anymore. Instinctively she sensed there was nothing left to return to in Poland since her home and village had been destroyed.

My father was born in Riga, Latvia and due to the war he also was a displaced person. My parents met in Germany and married in Australia. It was an alien land to my parents about which they knew little and my mother was fearful at the prospect of life in an unknown country. We might view this within the existential theme of lived space that led to my mother being afraid of a place she did not know or understand. Some of my mother's siblings returned to Poland and one brother moved to Canada extending the family network across three continents. My mother never saw her brothers or sisters again. Not only did the war remove my parents from their respective countries of birth, it resulted in a physical separation from family that caused loss and heartbreak as well as a permanent disconnection with the past for my parents—and me. My parents' marriage did not prosper, partly due to the curse of war and its effects on my father, according to my mother who raised my two siblings and me as a single parent. It was a difficult time for my mother who had no family or support systems in Australia, an interrupted education due to the war, little English and even fewer financial resources. She relied on her own resourcefulness and a steely determination to manage.

As a first-generation Australian of Polish and Latvian descent living in Adelaide, my life has straddled two cultures—the local Australian 'host' culture and the Polish culture as transmitted to me by the strong influence of my mother. My first language was Polish and my family followed the cultural traditions and practices that my mother transported from Poland. These were reinforced by members of the local expatriate Polish community, many of whom, like my mother, had experienced similar traumas during the war. As a group, they exemplified the cultural and religious enclaves that often form following diasporic relocations.

We celebrated Polish days of significance, shopped at Polish shops whenever possible, ate traditional Polish food, attended Polish Mass with other expatriates where the Polish and religious Catholic heritage were inextricably linked. As a child, should anyone inquire, I would respond with pride, that I was Polish, despite having been born in Australia. This often sparked a debate and sometimes a fierce argument with my friends who would insist that I was Australian regardless of my own self-identification. We can question why my Polish heritage made me feel a sense of pride. What is it about being Polish that made me feel so gratified and proud? Were my friends perhaps annoyed because they perceived I was passing judgement and being critical of their Anglo-Saxon background? Does a sense of pride about a cultural heritage imply one culture is better than another or constitute a value statement? I only stopped calling myself Polish when I started to travel to other countries as it seemed illogical given my Australian passport identity. My Slavic features, style of clothing, ability to speak Polish and a slight accent when speaking English made it apparent that I was different—from another place, not quite Australian. My mother would often refer to herself as a “new Australian”, a term used to describe immigrants in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s.

On Saturdays, with some resentment and resistance, I attended Polish school with my sister and brother where we learned to read and write Polish as well as learn about Polish history and the people. At the time as a child, I felt it was grossly unfair that I had to spend my Saturdays at school because my Australian friends, not having to attend school on the weekend, enjoyed unrestricted leisure time. Perhaps this was somewhat at odds with my overt feelings of pride in my Polish heritage although I am now eternally grateful to my mother for my literacy in Polish, and an ability to communicate with relatives in Poland. It allows me to engage with the Polish culture on a deeper and more intimate level. I have gained an understanding of the value of speaking another language that not only facilitates communication but allows me to enter another world.

Many Sunday afternoons were spent performing at a Polish *Akademia*, Academy, that is an exposition of Polish history and folklore, particularly on *Trzeciego Maja*, 3 May, Polish National Constitution Day. We would sing with great gusto and emotion, the Polish national anthem, *Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła póki my żyjemy* literally translating as, Poland has not yet disappeared while we are still alive, a phrase that symbolises for me resilience, perseverance, determination, and

survival. This statement has become my personal mantra throughout my life that I interpret as “I’m still standing”.

The neighbourhood in which I grew up and the schools that I attended similarly reflected the diaspora from Europe to Australia following the end of World War II. It was a multicultural school environment that resembled a microcosm of the world. Daily, I lived and interacted in a culturally rich and diverse environment, albeit one with a Eurocentric focus. Our neighbours, and the students at the local high school I attended, came from many Baltic and Mediterranean countries including Germany, Italy, Greece, the former Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Ukraine, Russia, Poland, Malta, and of course, Australia. On the whole, these groups of students generally interacted and integrated well.

My school friends included a mix of nationalities as well as “Australians”, people who were born in Australia of an Anglo-Saxon background. I always was impressed and a little envious of my Australian friends who could trace their family’s ancestry for generations since mine was lost with the war. A family story that cannot be verified is that my great grandmother was a member of the aristocratic Potocki family of Poland. No official records can be found to prove this connection but in the living memories of older family members there are several references to it that are a source of great pride, amusement and debate among our family in all corners of the world. Does this perhaps highlight the importance that we place on our historicity, or is it merely an attempt to elevate our family’s social standing?

During my childhood, we celebrated Christmas as my mother had with her family in Poland beginning with *Wigilia*, Christmas Eve reflecting the existential theme of time within Taylor’s description of tradition as “a social understanding of great temporal depth” (1989, p. 39). The children would eagerly check the evening sky to find the first star as, in keeping with the Polish tradition, the evening meal could not be served until it appeared. During the northern hemisphere winter this meant an early start to the celebrations but by contrast, the southern hemisphere summer meant a long wait for dinner that finally began with the breaking of the wafer known as *opłatek*. Some traditions, like this one of waiting for darkness in the skies, did not transfer to new locations as well as others did. But when each person took a piece of the wafer

and then shared it with all present while wishing each other special Christmas blessings, the old traditions had special significance.

This was then followed by several courses of food starting with *barszcz*, beetroot soup and *szyedze*, pickled herrings, and finishing with stewed fruit. Meat was not served on Christmas Eve. Presents were opened that evening and afterwards the family would attend Midnight Mass with other expatriate families, celebrated in the Polish language. I always thought it was strange that the church had several Christmas trees until I visited Poland and discovered that they represented the Polish forests. To this day, for me, attending a service in English at Christmas does not feel the same. It does not feel like an authentic celebration of this special time. It is the Polish Christmas carols that herald in the real Christmas for me.

On Christmas Day, we continued to celebrate with another family meal at which meat was served but it was a secondary celebration to *Wigilia* and did not seem to have the same significance since the pinnacle of Christmas had been celebrated the previous evening. The number of people at our Christmas meal was usually very small and I was very envious of my best friend Ann who would tell me that more than 30 people attended her family gathering. Her family had lived in Australia for generations and had not been fractured by war.

The great Christian tradition of Easter, *Wielkanoc*, was similarly celebrated in Polish style with a breakfast on Easter Sunday that had been blessed the day before by a Polish priest. On Easter Monday morning, there would be squeals of laughter as we chased and drenched each other outside using water pistols, buckets and even the garden hose, replicating the Polish custom that water symbolises life and new growth in the northern hemisphere spring. While as adults we no longer engage in such play, I recollect this memory every Easter Monday. As social anthropologist Wade Davis (2009, p. 19) reminds us, such elements of culture are, “unique expressions of the human imagination and heart, unique answers to a fundamental question. What does it mean to be human and alive?”

Although culture is much more than the ‘5 Fs’—food, festivals, flags, fables and famous people, ethnic food was certainly an important aspect of my childhood. Delicacies, that these

days in the Western world often feature in high cuisine, were our staple diet—duck, pigeon, goose, in addition to basic Polish dishes such as cabbage rolls, sauerkraut, Polish sausage, always with lashings of garlic. All this helped to make me feel different from others, especially during school lunch breaks. You could often smell my food as soon as I opened my lunch box, much to my embarrassment in front of my friends, eating their sandwiches filled with odourless peanut butter or Vegemite—the uniquely and ubiquitous Australian black spread made from yeast extract. The sight of my mother riding her bike to school delivering me hot homemade soup in a thermos caused me pronounced feelings of self-consciousness as none of the other students had soup for lunch in those days. While it was in keeping with the Polish tradition of having a hot meal at lunchtime instead of the dinner meal, and I enjoyed the soup, it appeared to reinforce my feeling of being different.

My cultural roots were inextricably linked to the local environment in which I lived and the ‘transported’ Polish culture of pre-World War II. Although I can function effectively within both cultures, my knowledge of each culture was, and continues to be incomplete, leading to a degree of confusion and frustration that causes me to reflect on my identity. Living in such a culturally and linguistically diverse environment coupled with my personal history has resulted in my moving regularly between cultures.

Adelaide, where I grew up, is made up of people from a mix of nationalities from successive waves of migrants. People who arrived in Australia with high hopes, dreams and aspirations came, and continue to come, because of different personal, social, cultural, political and economic reasons. Over one in four people living in Australia in 2016 was born in another country (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Prior to 1973, most migrants came from Britain, Ireland and other European countries due to a discriminatory set of immigration policies including the Immigration Restriction Act 1901 that aimed to restrict the entry of people from Asia. The historical roots of this exclusion approach, known as the White Australia Policy, was the resentment said to be felt by the local people towards the successful Chinese gold miners in the 19th Century (The “White Australia” Policy, 2016).

The Australian demographics changed after the government abolished this approach and successive waves of migration over the years have resulted in a more culturally and racially

diverse population. Australia has generally enjoyed a successful record of migration where now people of diverse backgrounds are perceived to add to the richness and colour of Australian society, living together harmoniously and embracing each other's cultures. Different ethnic festivals are common in Adelaide such as Glendi (Greek), *Carnivale* (Italian), *Diwali* (Indian), *Schützenfest* (German), Womad (World Music), French film festival, Oz Asia festival, Chinese New Year and the Chinese lantern festival. Most are well attended and celebrated not just by the local ethnic communities, but by people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

While these images might suggest an inclusive and cohesive society this is not always the case. Each wave of migrants has been met with an initial degree of suspicion at first but for the most part, over time, they have successfully integrated into the community and coexisted in harmony. It is perhaps fair to say that people belonging to minority diasporic groups have had more difficulty being accepted and fitting into the mainstream of Australian society. Sadly, in a time of global uncertainty and unrest, Australia like many other countries has seen, in recent years, a rise in nationalism and fundamentalism making it difficult for some groups to live peacefully and threatening the social cohesion of the nation.

The Cronulla riots in December 2005 between people of Middle Eastern appearance and white Australians on a popular Sydney beach that spread to other suburbs is an example of race riots and mob violence that caused outrage and was widely condemned by political and social leaders. "Reclaim Australia" is a far-right movement that was formed in 2015 that has held several protest rallies against Islam in cities across the country. The 2016 Australian Federal Election resulted in the election to Parliament of four members of the One Nation Party whose Principles and Objectives include,

To stop the teaching and infiltration of Islam and its totalitarian ideology, that opposes our democracy, way of life and laws. To ban the Burqa in public places, government buildings and schools. ... Ban the building of any more Mosques.
(Principles and Objectives, 2017)

By contrast, and by good fortune, I experienced no antagonism towards my cultural background and developed a positive attitude towards people of diverse backgrounds. Without perhaps consciousness of it, this rich cultural diversity appears to have a strong effect on me and

affected my life choices and life path. I have studied different languages including Polish, French, Greek, Latin and sign language. I have lived in three countries and travelled to 34 countries on four continents. My husband was born in England. I have attended ethnic dance classes. I listen to an eclectic range of music by artists from around the world often singing in various languages. The Eurovision Song Contest, to my friends' amusement, is a highlight for me with its international artists to whom I feel connected because of my European heritage. I am drawn to, and look forward to, watching the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games on television to observe the parade of athletes from around the world. My cross-cultural background and personal connection with each country means that I feel a sense of pride when I see the teams from Australia, Poland and Latvia, highlighting my allegiance to these countries and tripling the chance of one of my teams winning gold. The need for regular visits to Poland to connect with my family and roots sometimes feels like an uncontrollable urge. Tears always come to my eyes at the first sight of Warsaw from the window of the plane.

My personal epiphany occurred about 18 years ago when I attended a presentation by the late David Pollock, a leading and highly respected authority on 'Third Culture Kids'. It was an emotional moment when I finally learned that I was not 'unusual or strange' as I had so often felt before. I was comforted that it was 'normal' to feel as I did and that other people had similar thoughts and feelings as I had as a result of growing up in a cross-cultural environment. It is difficult to know to what extent my cross-cultural childhood has affected my choices but as I reflect on my experiences of living between two cultures it seems to have had a significant influence on the way that I view the world, and how I choose to lead my life, both personally and professionally.

The Bowerbird flies the coup

My professional life has involved a career in education that has had a similar cross-cultural focus as my personal life. After completing my tertiary studies, my first position was that of a teacher in a primary school in Adelaide but I was attracted to working with people from diverse cultural backgrounds and actively sought out opportunities to do so, both within Australia and outside of Australia.

The first time that I left Australia to work in an international environment was when I became an exchange teacher in Houston, Texas in the United States. I remember being surprised by the differences that I encountered on arrival but my openness and receptiveness to other cultures and people is perhaps best summed up by a friend's comment, who told me when I lived in Houston that "You are more Texan than us Texans". Based on the Intercultural Development Inventory, this comment would suggest that I lean towards the intercultural mindset range of the intercultural continuum leading towards adaptation (Straub, 2016). My membership of professional associations such as the International Schools Association of which I was a member of the Board of Governors, my personal studies including a Masters Degree in International Education and other employment positions where I have worked closely with international students have always included a strong cross-cultural focus.

My next role working in an international environment was Principal of an international school in Singapore. Gaining this position felt like a personal and professional milestone, following an eight-week selection process that included a Skype interview, an interstate face-to-face interview and an international flight from Australia to Singapore, as well as the expenditure of a tremendous amount of emotional energy. To be selected to lead a school is a humbling experience that bestows significant responsibility given the potential the role holds to have considerable impact, not only on the students, but on the whole school and wider community.

Preparing young people for life in the 21st Century is a challenging task. It is not for the faint-hearted or weak. What then causes someone to consider such a position as leader of a school? In my case, it was the unshakeable belief that education is the single most powerful life-changing force that has the capacity to shape individuals and transform society. But why did I accept a position at an overseas destination rather than in the city of Adelaide where I have a strong network of family and friends, and have built a new home? The answer lies both within the school and within me. The school was an international school with students ranging from 3 to 14 years of age. The school population was diverse with a total of 23 countries represented amongst the student population, almost exclusively from expatriate families working and living in Singapore. Staff, too, were mostly expatriates from countries within Australasia, the Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America.

While having an international clientele and perspectives, the school offered the Australian curriculum developed by the Australian Curriculum and Assessment and Research Authority (ACARA). The curriculum is based on the key principles of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians. They include promoting equity and excellence and enabling all students to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008). The curriculum consists of eight key learning areas and all students learned a second language, choosing between Mandarin and French, with Mandarin being the most popular due to the location of the school.

I was attracted to the school by its inclusive, supportive and nurturing environment that recognises diversity and values each student as an individual. The School Board was made up, in the main, of individuals who had worked and lived internationally and who, as such, had an excellent understanding of the expatriate community and international education. I felt extremely honoured and privileged to be able to lead the school and felt very much at home working with such a diverse group of colleagues and school community. Singapore is one of the great melting pots of the world. The diversity of the school reflected its community of Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians and large numbers of people from Asia, Australia, Europe and North America.

Selection of a Head of School is a two-way process. The match between the school and me was not just philosophical or educational. It was a synergy of thinking about the world and a desire to be part of the world with real global perspectives and real-life application of cross-cultural skills and understanding. It was fuelled by my desire to work with children who have had cross-cultural experiences like myself. I was keen to use the first-hand knowledge that I have of this experience to assist students, staff and parents to recognise, understand and respond to a cross-cultural childhood.

As Senior Adviser to the Federal Member for Adelaide and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education, I helped to promote the Australian international education export industry and regularly liaised with international dignitaries. At the school level, I have been involved in marketing, recruitment and the pastoral care of international students who come to study in Adelaide. This involved daily interaction with students from different cultural

backgrounds as well as their parents and international marketing agents. These experiences have helped me to develop my cross-cultural skills and foster my interest and insights into the phenomenon of a cross-cultural childhood.

Presently I am employed as a School Support and Evaluation Officer by the Council of International Schools (CIS), a not-for-profit member organisation of schools, colleges and higher education institutions in 115 countries. The CIS vision “to inspire the development of global citizens through high quality international education” mirrors my own values. I work with about 75 schools in nine countries and regularly travel to China, Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan, and throughout Australia.

My role is to support schools to achieve their goal of attaining school accreditation leading to the globally recognised award of CIS International Accreditation. I help schools to develop international perspectives through high quality programs focused on global citizenship and intercultural competency. The CIS administrative headquarters are based in the attractive university town of Leiden in The Netherlands. My colleagues come from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and are based in different parts of the world including Europe, Asia, and North America. Working as an educator with colleagues from a variety of backgrounds, and schools with culturally diverse students and staff provides me with a culturally rich work environment.

I finally feel that I am working where I belong since it is in a culturally diverse environment that I feel truly at home. Is this a legacy of my cross-cultural childhood supported by the cross-cultural sensitivity, knowledge and skills that I developed as I was growing up and that allow me to thrive in such a work environment? During our CIS team meetings when my colleagues and I come together twice a year in Leiden, I sometimes pinch myself that I am a member of this diverse and highly professional team. My work provides me with the cultural stimulation that I seem to crave. The role and its nomadic lifestyle have finally eradicated the feeling of restlessness, and my long search for something else that I could not name but that I have experienced most of my life. Pollock and Van Reken tell us that this feeling of restlessness is a common characteristic of people who have experienced a cross-cultural childhood (2009, pp. 126-129).

In my attempt to illuminate our understanding of the phenomenon of a cross-cultural childhood, in this thesis I reflect on my personal and professional experiences that provide me with a rich orientation to empathise and give meaning to my hermeneutic inquiry. I use my personal experiences to add veracity to the interpretation of the life narratives that Sokolowski describes in the *Phenomenology of the Human Person* as “the human inclination to attain the truth of things” (2008, p. 20).

In the following chapter we draw on the analogy of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Chartres, France as a metaphor of the cross-cultural phenomenon. I visited the Cathedral some years ago and was immediately struck by the parallels between the history and physical features of the Cathedral and aspects of a cross-cultural childhood. The comparisons provide an overview of the issues and concepts that emerge in this inquiry.

Chapter 3 – THE NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL, CHARTRES, FRANCE: A CROSS-CULTURAL METAPHOR



The Notre Dame Cathedral, Chartres, France

The Notre Dame Cathedral of Chartres, France looms tall, a majestic structure of Gothic form created by artists and artisans in days gone by, visible from afar across fields of wheat, ancient village dwellings and contemporary homes and buildings. For centuries, it has been a silent observer of the prosaic existence of people living on the plains below, yet with the ability to elicit

emotion from those who gaze at its architectural splendour. The Cathedral spires, amidst a backdrop of blue sky, compete with the clouds for attention, stretching ever upwards seemingly touching the sky and transcending the earthly existence of this world.

This iconic religious and spiritual monument, a wonder of human creativity, imagination and craftsmanship, stands as a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the search for something greater than ourselves, or indeed, is it a search for something within ourselves? The collective imaginings and efforts of craftsmen of long ago have provided a sacred space for individual and community worship, reflection and meditation. For many it is a source of hope, inspiration, solace and wonder.

The Cathedral has a long history as a pilgrimage destination and, on any given day, hundreds of people visit it. Over the years, the Cathedral has drawn people from far and wide—the young and old, the faithful and the skeptic, the rich and the poor, the noble and the common, the pilgrim and the local, the lost and the found, each person with his or her own historicity and story. All are touched by this imposing structure and some are mesmerised, like David, the retired Jewish teacher from the United States, with whom a chance encounter in Chartres reveals that he has made an annual pilgrimage for the past 43 years to sit and gaze at the same stained-glass window. What draws pilgrims and voyeurs alike by foot, car, bus, train and plane from around the world to this revered and sacred site?

Like each visitor, the Cathedral holds its own history with hidden secrets and many influences that shape its appearance and character today. As the Cathedral bells toll and beckon the faithful to Mass, we may consider the Cathedral is calling us to regard it as a metaphor for the lived experiences of people with a cross-cultural childhood. In this chapter, we explore the themes that emerge from our regard for the Cathedral offering us a useful overview for a hermeneutic interpretation of the narrative inquiries contained in this thesis.

Long revered as a significant site of worship and pilgrimage, from the Merovingian and early Carolingian eras to the modern day, the Notre Dame Cathedral of Chartres has had multiple identities including that of a site of pagan rituals as well as Christian worship. Ravaged by fires

and ancient battles, the Cathedral has been rebuilt at least five times since the 4th Century with numerous enhancements and restorations over time. Nowhere is this more evident than in the two very different and mismatched spires, the plain Romanesque pyramid built in the 12th Century and the slightly taller intricate Gothic spire built in the 16th Century. Yet, in its entirety, the Cathedral remains an object of beauty, retaining coherence and wholeness.

Since pre-Biblical times to the present day, millions of people have been caught in conflicts and natural disasters resulting in numerous diaspora of people seeking safe refuge. Others have chosen to leave their birthplace seeking better education and employment opportunities in other countries or for personal or cultural reasons. Like the Cathedral, each person who has experienced a cross-cultural childhood retains characteristics of different cultural influences that form part of the whole person.

Rivers of Babylon, Boney M.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FgDles4xq8&sns=em>

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
Yeah we wept, when we remembered Zion ...

When the wicked
Carried us away in captivity
Required from us a song
Now how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land ...

Let the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart
Be acceptable in thy sight here tonight ...

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down
Yeah we wept, when we remembered Zion ...

By the rivers of Babylon (dark tears of Babylon)
There we sat down (you got to sing a song)
Yeah we wept, (sing a song of love)
When we remember Zion ...

By the rivers of Babylon (rough bits of Babylon)
There we sat down (you hear the people cry)
Yeah we wept (they need their god)
When we remember Zion (ooh, have the power ...)

The persecution and displacement of people due to ethnicity, religious beliefs and political motivations date back to the earliest records of the history of humankind. Sadly, it continues to be a divisive and destructive feature of our modern times. *Rivers of Babylon* written in 1970 by Brent Dowe and Trevor McNaughton was made famous by the 1978 recording by Boney M. We may view it as epitomising the pain of forced diaspora and the loss of homeland. The song describes the exile of the Jewish people from Jerusalem following the conquest by the Babylonians in 607BCE. It is based on Psalms 19 and 137 of the sacred writings of the Jewish people called the Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Scriptures or Tanaka and the Old Testament of the Christian Bible (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2017).

The rivers of Babylon that are mentioned in the song are the Tigris-Euphrates river systems that flow through the Middle East and Mesopotamia that now includes eastern Syria, southeastern Turkey and Iraq where there are still political tensions and fighting. This song is relevant because of the lyrics and the scenes in the video representing Biblical and modern-day diaspora. The intensity of emotions felt by people caught in a diaspora is highlighted through the oft-repeated chorus that refers to the weeping of the exiled people. It allows us to share the sense of sadness and despair that the Jewish people experienced following their exile and the intense longing for their lost homeland.

Similarly, the song offers insights into disconnection and the difficulty that people from different cultures sometimes encounter in transposing cultural traditions and norms in the words, “Now how shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land ... Let the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart, Be acceptable in thy sight here tonight”. This is echoed in the life stories included in this thesis and helps us to consider some of the cultural and personal difficulties faced by people who have been part of a diaspora.

Not everyone responds to the cross-cultural childhood experience in the same manner (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 18) and, for some people, there appears to be cohesion between the elements resulting in a wholeness of being like the Cathedral. For others, it seems to lead to a constant and conscious search for self often resulting in a pilgrimage to distant destinations in an endeavour to make connections with the past and make sense of the present and themselves. One famous person to undertake such a recent pilgrimage was the former President of the United States, Barack Obama who journeyed to his father’s homeland, Kenya in search of a better understanding of his own identity.

I can vividly recall my great excitement and anticipation as I made my personal pilgrimage to Poland, the birth land of my mother. Having been brought up in the language and traditions of my mother, there was a conscious thought that I was going ‘home’ although I was born in Australia. Nothing prepared me for the overwhelming feeling that overtook my whole being as I crossed the German Polish border at dusk. It was as if I had truly come home.

The feeling of familiarity was more tangible than just recalling my mother’s description of her home country. I had never been to Poland before and had only heard stories from my mother and learned about Poland at Polish school on Saturday mornings. Even the deer crossing the road at the border paused and looked at me, seemingly knowingly, as I arrived. Was it a sense of *déjà vu*? Was it cellular memory? Or was it the result of unleashed emotions because of a cross-cultural childhood? Whatever the reason, the sensation remains with me forever and subsequent trips to Poland always evoke emotion as soon as the plane nears Warsaw, peaking at the sight of the city from the sky.

My siblings experienced a similar compelling urge to ‘return’ to Poland, the land of our ancestral roots, each returning to Australia with a fuller understanding of our cultural heritage as well as of our mother. We return too with greater confusion about our own identity. I hold an Australian passport, yet am I an Australian? Am I Polish or some sort of hybrid? Am I Australian-Polish or Polish-Australian? Is there a difference, and, if so, what is the difference? Or am I something in between, never quite fitting in properly anywhere, amplified when people in Australia ask “Where are you from?” because they detect a slight accent even though I was born and raised in South Australia?

Mario, who appears in Chapter 4, emigrates from Italy to Australia as a child and who is now in his 40s, regularly returns to Italy to re-connect with family still living in Rome as well as with the conscious thought of re-connecting with himself. Each visit has led Mario to review his relationship with his family in Italy and his own identity, providing another example of the search for self across global horizons, each trip a personal pilgrimage by the cross-cultural adult.

A striking analogy of this search for self, is the large circular labyrinth made of white stone and dark marble inlaid in the western nave of the Cathedral. Labyrinths have been created over the centuries around the world by both pagans and Christians alike to symbolise our journey through life. They provide a space for contemplative reflection when the path is followed from the outer circumference to the centre. The medieval labyrinth in the Chartres Cathedral consists of a path within eleven circles that twists and turns thereby depicting the journey of life from birth to death. In the same way, the experience of a cross-cultural childhood can lead people to explore, internally and externally, their sense of self with their own life path often involving twists and turns. There are only metal plates left where the copper plate at the centre of the labyrinth in the Cathedral had once been. And so it is, that those who experience a cross-cultural childhood, sometimes fruitlessly search for the essence of their identity throughout the course of their lives without seemingly being able to find it.

The right to self-identify as described by Heiss, an academic and writer of Austrian and Indigenous Australian heritage, in her book, *Am I Black Enough for You?* (2012), often involves paths with twists where the journey of self-exploration and self-identification can be thwarted by other people who show a keenness to label the identity of others. In the case of Heiss, these

people range from classmates to journalist, newspaper columnist and television host Andrew Bolt who calls her self-exploration a self-obsession in his article, “It’s so hip to be black” (2009) in which he questions Heiss’ motives in publicly exploring her identity. Heiss expresses her determination to explore and define her own identity when she writes, “I know that I should not be punished for the life and person that I am and that I should sacrifice nothing in realising the complex layers of who I am” (2012, p. 255). The Federal Court of Australia subsequently ruled that Bolt’s article contravened the Racial Discrimination Act and was unlawful.

Reyn’s novel, *What Happened to Anna K.* (2008), a modern story loosely based on the Tolstoy classic *Anna Karenina* is about a fictional character named Anna, a Jewish Russian immigrant living in New York. The story explores what happens to the Russian element of her character’s identity, which she describes as *Velikai Russaika Dusha*, “The Great Russian Soul”, when it is transported to America. “This Russian disease ... an indifference toward anything that is vital – toward the truth of life, everything that nourishes life and generates health” (Reyn, 2008, p. 13). Reyn describes manifestations of this indifference as shopping extortions, rebukes from strangers and suspicion of positive sentiments that is akin to my experience of the Polish *Dusza* or soul, indifference to the enjoyment of others and fondness for politically incorrect jokes. Like Heiss, Anna K.’s identity was continually questioned by other people—“There was nothing appropriate anymore about Anna ... Was she even Russian anymore?” (p. 215). Reyn, a person with a cross-cultural childhood herself, has stated that the novel defines her and was drawn from her own experiences as a Russian immigrant in New York.

Anna K. suffered great torment and fathomless pain in her attempt to live between two cultures resulting in a tragic end, like that of Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*. “She was always weighing, she was exhausted with managing her own story. Neither here nor there, an eternal purgatory” (Reyn, 2008, p. 325). The abyss that Anna K. faced seemed to be no deeper nor darker than the depths of the Celtic well, known as the Well of Saint-Forts, that lies concealed deep in the ancient crypt beneath the Cathedral. Anna K. suffered the same tragic consequence as she jumped in front of a train that the martyrs of the early church experienced when they were thrown into the well. Obama too, refers to a great void as he attempts to define his identity, “I had been forced to look inside myself and had found only a great emptiness there” (2004, p. 302).

Whilst Taylor (1992) describes the concept of identity as a relatively new concept linked to the post-Romantic understanding of individual differences, family genealogy has been of significance since ancient times and an important determinant of an individual's pathways through life. The genealogy of Jesus is depicted in the Jesse Window in the Chartres Cathedral in the shape of a family tree. The intricate and spectacular glass panels include four Kings, Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the key prophets who announced the coming of Christ (Houvet, n.d.). The reflection of colours on the ground in the Cathedral seem to mirror the importance of an individual's historicity. The ancestors of Jesus are included amongst the carved figures on the royal portal, the main door on the western side.

The Bible contains great details of the ancestry of Christ in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus' ancestry is traced back 40 generations while Luke in his gospel lists the names of 75 ancestors of Jesus (Houvet, n.d.). Different cultures provide examples of identity using patronyms including, the Anglo-Saxon name Johnson meaning 'Son of John' and the common Swedish name Johansson meaning 'Son of Johan'. Papal and royal titles like Pope John Paul XXIII and King Henry VIII reflect a connection with the past and are integral in the identification and self-identification of distinguished individuals. The custom of passing on the same name from father to son with the addition of the suffix Senior or Junior is another way of defining identity. Ostentatious as it may sometimes seem to us, it reflects the importance placed on identity through family connections.

According to Taylor (1992), the full definition of oneself is defined in reference to a defining community and for those with cross-cultural backgrounds the web can be complex and spread far and wide. Identification provides individuals with a frame or horizon that allows a person to define what is important or not. Heiss seems to exemplify this as she writes, "My spirit belongs and will finally rest with those of my ancestors back in Wiradjuri ngurumbang (country)" (2012, p. 3). The Cathedral in Chartres is renowned for its stained-glass windows. It contains the world's largest collection of medieval glass with 176 stained-glass windows and 12,000 scenes depicting stories of the people of God (Houvet, n.d.). Education was for the rich and the elite in the medieval ages. Stained-glass windows were created so that the illiterate masses could come to know and understand the stories of the Bible. Personal identity is very much involved in the treasury of remembering and imaginings. Heiss tells, "My identity is not about race—it is about my family history" (p. 80).

For those whose family history crisscrosses different global horizons, stories are used to help develop an understanding of identity and one's sense of place in the world. Obama finds that, "As time passed stories helped me bind my world together, that they gave me sense and purpose I'd been looking for" (2004, p. 190). When these stories are fractured or incomplete because of cross-cultural childhoods, the effect on individuals can be great. The disconnection with the past can continue from one generation to the next. In *What Happened to Anna K.* the character Lev envisages a future conversation with his young son,

Who Am I? Roman might ask him when he got older, when questions like that would begin to press their way into his consciousness. *How do I know?* Lev would be forced to say. *I barely know what I want. Who I am.* (Reyn, 2008, p. 198)

The site of the Chartres Cathedral has long been a centre of female worship with ancient records showing that a pagan queen was worshipped on the site. Christians venerated the mother of Jesus at an altar of Mary as far back as the 6th Century while in the 18th Century the Cathedral was used as a temple to the Goddess of Reason. The most sacred feature in the Chartres Cathedral is the Veil of the Virgin, known as the *Sancta Camisa* or Sacred Tunic that dates to the 1st Century. It is believed to be the shroud that Mary, in keeping with the Eastern custom of the time, wrapped herself in after giving birth to Jesus. In recognition of the Cathedral's long-standing devotion to Mary, this silk relic was donated by King Charles the Bald, the grandson of Charlemagne, the King of the Franks in the 1st Century, who received the veil as a gift from the Byzantine Empress Irene of Constantinople (Houvet, n.d.).

Veils have been traditionally worn by women to cover themselves and in some cultures are used to cover the head and face as a sign of modesty, respect, and protection. People from cross-cultural childhoods, in attempts to belong, sometimes try to hide elements of themselves to be accepted. A poignant example is that of the young girl Màirie, who we meet in Chapter 6, and who, before immigrating to Australia with her parents from Scotland, hid in a cupboard because she did not want to be in a strange and foreign land that she did not understand and that she felt did not understand her.

Perhaps even more poignant, is the reaction of Holly who we meet in Chapter 5. She was born in South Korea and at the age of 12 while boarding at a school in Australia, erased all her Korean songs and email addresses of her Korean friends in a conscious effort to hide her Korean-ness to fit in with her peers. Indeed, she may have been not only hiding elements of her identity from others but from herself as well. She would compartmentalise aspects of her identity, revealing them only in certain safe cultural settings, like the stained-glass panels in the Cathedral carefully removed during World War I and World War II, and replaced afterwards.

All religions seek to purport the truth according to their own beliefs. Sokolowski reasons that the search for truth is an innate desire.

Veracity is the desire for truth, it specifies us as human beings. We are persons because we are rational. We are born with this desire and are carried along by it. It is very deep in us, more basic than any particular desire or emotion. (2008, p. 21)

Is not one of the central truths to find one's self? Might we consider that the constant yearning and continual quest by those with a cross-cultural background is fuelled by an inner compulsion to find self and develop a sense of identity? Even Jesus defined himself in John's gospel with the statement, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" that is a key tenet of the Christian religion (Catholic Biblical Association of Great Britain, 2011, p. 1098).

Christian religions teach that all are welcome and belong as the children of God and as brothers and sisters descended from Adam. While some religions today struggle with their continued relevance and declining church attendances, belonging and connectedness remain relevant for all people and the concepts of identity and belonging seem somewhat more complex for those who have experienced a cross-cultural childhood. Like the Notre Dame Cathedral of Chartres, the search for self sometimes requires great endurance, resilience and patience over a long period of time.

Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien, Edith Piaf



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFtGfyrUroU&sns=em>

Non, rien de rien, non, je ne regrette rien / No, nothing, no, I don't regret anything
Ni le bien qu'on m'a fait, ni le mal / Neither the good done to me, nor the bad
Tout ça m'est bien égal / All this is very much the same to me
Non, rien de rien, non, je ne regrette rien / No, nothing, no, I don't regret anything
C'est payé, balayé, oublié / It's paid, swept away, forgotten
Je me fous du passé / I don't care about the past

Avec mes souvenirs j'ai allumé le feu / With my memories I lit the fire
Mes chagrins, mes plaisirs / My sorrows, my pleasures
Je n'ai plus besoin d'eux / I no longer need them
Balayé les amours avec leurs trémolos / Swept away the loves with their troubles
Balayé pour toujours / Swept away forever
Je repars à zéro / I start again with nothing ...

Car ma vie, car mes joies / For my life, for my joys
Aujourd'hui ça commence avec toi / Today it starts with you

Edith Piaf, sometimes known as the Little Sparrow, is one of France's most famous singers. After a childhood of hardship and poverty, the late Piaf became famous in the early 20th Century for her songs filled with passion and emotion. Her songs continue to be popular and form part of France's music and cultural history. Piaf's distinctive voice and songs represent France to me and remind me of my time in Chartres. *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien*, No, I Regret Nothing, is one of

Piaf's most popular and well-known songs, capturing a spirit of hope, defiance and resilience despite life's challenges. Piaf dedicated the song to the French Foreign Legion. It has become part of the Legion's heritage and is sung on special occasions. *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien* reminds me of the challenges that the Notre Dame Cathedral of Chartres has faced over time. It reminds me of the challenges that people with a cross-cultural childhood often face that we find out later in this thesis can result in feelings of regret.

The following three chapters provide an account of the life stories of the people who are the focus of this narrative inquiry. We consider their individual cross-cultural journeys that provide the basis of our hermeneutic reflection of a cross-cultural childhood in Chapters 7 and 8.

Chapter 4 – THE ROCKY ROAD BACK TO ROME: MARIO

Mario is a teacher in his early 40s who joins the teaching profession late in life after working as an accountant for several years. We meet when he is employed as a teacher at the private girls' school where I am working. He is a popular member of staff who is known affectionately by students, staff and parents as Mr D. after the first letter of his last name because most people have difficulty pronouncing it. Students enjoy his sense of humour and appreciate his genuine care and concern for their academic progress and welfare. He is well liked and respected and enjoys good positive working relationships with both teaching and non-teaching staff. I come to know Mario personally through our casual staffroom conversations during recess and lunch breaks. During our many conversations it becomes apparent to me that he identifies strongly with his cultural heritage. We enjoy discussing our cross-cultural experiences and laughing over a cup of coffee about some of the quirks of our respective ethnic communities in Adelaide.

On one occasion Mario comes to see me in my role as Vice Principal regarding a need to take some personal leave and our conversation eventually turns to family matters. I gain a true appreciation of the extent to which his cross-cultural childhood has affected him and influenced his life. As a result, I invite him to participate in this narrative inquiry. He is quick to agree and keen to share his story. Mario willingly discloses his personal experiences to me from his early life in Italy and his family's emigration to Australia to the time of the interview. He shares with me his recollections of his childhood and discusses his cross-cultural life as an adult.

The runner and the romantic dreamer: From Italy to Australia (without love)

Mario is born in Rome, Italy in 1970. He emigrates to Australia in 1978 when he is 8 years of age with his family including his father, mother and older sister. His description of his home in Italy seems to suggest a somewhat segmented existence. Although the family home is situated in an area considered to be a cosmopolitan part of Rome, it is located within a compound that he describes as “a village within a village”. The family lives in a two-storey post-World War II flat that had been built by his grandfather. The extended family, including his *Nonna*, grandmother, live in the compound that helps to strengthen his family and cultural ties. His *Nonna* lives in a flat above his home and his aunt lives below.

While most of the family live in Italy, an aunt and uncle from his mother’s side move to Australia in the 1950s. He tells me that they have experienced a poor and harsh upbringing in the south of Italy and presumably are in search of a better life—a common cause of migration. The family loses contact with them then once they move to Australia even though they are close relatives. His uncle is about 20 years older than his mother who is the youngest child and not thought of highly by the rest of the family. As the eldest son, the uncle has been a “surrogate father” and “enforcer of the rules” and he is not missed when he leaves. Perhaps his role and his family’s attitude towards him contribute to the loss of contact.

The story of Mario’s family’s migration is an interesting one. It is with some nostalgia that he describes his father as “a romantic dreamer” who holds a long-standing desire to emigrate to Australia. He is the driving force behind the family’s move. The root of his desire is not perhaps for more common reasons such as a search for a better life or to escape conditions in the home country but the result of a seemingly unrelated event that he witnesses. It is during the 1960 summer Olympic Games held in Rome, that Herb Elliot a renowned Australian athlete and middle-distance runner wins the 1500 metre final and sets a new world record. This becomes a life-changing event not only for the famous Australian runner, but for Mario’s family as well. His father is in the grandstands watching the race and thus begins his romance and infatuation with Australia. Herb Elliott’s record-breaking achievement has such a strong effect on him that he develops the view that Australia is “paradise”.

Over time, Mario's father becomes more and more infatuated with the idyllic Australia and correspondingly more disenchanted with Italy. He begins to view everything in Italy as "bad" and, in turn, everything in Australia as "good". It eventually leads him to decide that he wants to live there and he becomes antagonistic to his family in Italy. Even when he is a young boy, Mario remembers his father as always being radical and unpredictable but increasingly so after he develops his fascination with Australia.

The father is relentless in his dream to emigrate and after many years of trying to persuade his wife, he finally "wears her down" and, in exasperation, she agrees to move to Australia in 1975. By then Italy has recovered from the effects of World War II and, in Mario's opinion, is more cultured and prosperous than Australia. He describes his mother as a reasonably traditional woman at that stage who respects her husband's role as the head of the household and chief decision-maker yet she stipulates the conditions under which she will emigrate. The move is to be final and the family is not to return to Italy. Is this perhaps an act of defiance considering the cultural norms with which she has grown up? We may wonder what emotions she is experiencing as she declares the terms on which she will emigrate given that she will have to live with the consequences as well. Is she angry and resentful? Is she fearful?

The account of the events leading up to the family's emigration to Australia paints a picture of an acrimonious relationship between the parents. As he reflects on his mother's decision and the ultimatum, Mario describes her as being embittered. "It was a vindictive thing", he says. To add to the emotional tension and upheaval Mario's father insists that the family leave before Fathers' Day even though his wife's father is dying as they are in the last stages of preparing to emigrate. His mother begs to stay so she can be with her father but Mario's father is determined to leave after the necessary arrangements are made and the family leaves as soon as everything is in place. Sadly, for Mario's mother, and his parents' relationship, her father passes away while they are en route to Australia. To make the parting and loss more painful, she learns that in his last hours he calls for her and his grandchildren. This is a tragic loss for Mario's mother and it seems to cement the divide between his parents. We can only imagine the heartbreak that his mother felt at that time. Until then they appear to have lived as a family in what Mario describes as a happy environment.

Living upside down in the land down under

The family arrives in Adelaide in October 1975. Unfortunately, after finally achieving the goal he held for 15 years, Mario's father "almost immediately the second he set foot in Australia" regrets coming and wants to return to Italy. Seemingly showing great determination, his mother refuses to go back making him adhere to the conditions of her original agreement. "Culture shock" is a term used to describe the reaction of people moving between cultures who have difficulty in adjusting to their circumstances (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001, pp. 227-228; Ezra, 2003, p. 125). The more that Mario speaks of his father's response to his new life in Australia, the more it might seem to us that his father was experiencing culture shock. The lack of familiarity of the new environment, the differences between the two countries and the language barrier, since his father did not speak English, may have contributed to his desire to return home. A story Mario recounts, although he is not sure if it is something he remembers or something his mother told him, helps us to see that even simple things do not always work the same way in different countries.

In Italy in summer often the family would go to the high mountains in a wine region just outside Rome where the weather is cooler and there are beautiful lakes to enjoy. In an attempt to try to replicate the family traditions from Italy and, paradoxically given that they now live in the southern hemisphere, to escape the heat of the long hot summer days in Adelaide, the family drives to the nearby Mount Lofty Hills to cool off from the heat. Not only does the family find the hills and surrounding countryside disappointing as they do not match, in their opinion, the spectacular scenery of the Roman mountains, but it is "five times hotter there than the plains". Mario says disappointments like this made his father realise "that he was not in Kansas anymore". This is a reference to the popular old fictional movie "The Wizard of Oz" in which the main character Dorothy awakes after being hit in the head and knocked unconscious during a tornado on her family farm in Kansas, to find the landscape and everyone and everything in it to be unfamiliar. Perhaps we can view this as an analogy of Pollock and Van Reken's concept of loss of cultural balance, "that almost unconscious knowledge of how things are and work in a particular community" (2009, p. 44). There seems to be a distinct parallel between Mario's father and Dorothy's feelings of disorientation.

Settling into their new life in Australia appears to be challenging for the whole family. One of Mario's vivid memories is starting school, describing it as a "hilarious thing" although at the time we can imagine there is little laughter. The family has moved in with the uncle known as 'the disciplinarian' and the adults decide that it will be a good idea for the children to attend school immediately. No regard is given to it being almost the end of the school year or the children being unable to speak a word of English. Without any familiarisation or time to settle in, the children set off for school with their cousins the following week. This first schooling experience in Australia lasts two days. Reliving the experience, Mario recalls being "completely bewildered" and "in tears" on his first day at school. The same thing happens on the second day so he is granted a reprieve with his parents agreeing that he does not have to attend school until the start of the next school year that begins in January.

It is about this time that the parents obtain their own rental residence and move out from the uncle's home to a suburb that Mario describes as "a small Italian Greek Yugoslav ghetto". While this gives the family their independence, he tells me that it is not considered to be a desirable area in those days. Most people living there keep to themselves in monocultural enclaves. We can imagine that this provides the new migrants with a degree of familiarity and security as they interact with people from the same ethnic backgrounds and common language. Perhaps it helps to reduce the feeling of being foreigners in a strange and distant land. Does it inadvertently limit their integration and acceptance into the wider community and contribute to their feeling of alienation? As a child I recall attending Polish events on weekends and could not participate in local community activities. I had more friends with a Polish background at that age because my interaction with a more diverse group of people was limited.

Pulling at the heartstrings: Family pressures

Reflecting the strong family ties and the effect of their departure on the remaining relatives in Italy, the family experiences considerable pressure to return. After two years of living in Australia, an aunt arrives from Italy with the aim of convincing the family to return. She explains that their departure is the most traumatic event that she has ever experienced in her life. At that time, Mario and his sister are her only niece and nephew. Seeming to display an aversion to some stereotypes that exist about Italian people and their culture, Mario feels the size of his family dispels what he describes as the myth that all Italians have large families. The aunt's visit triggers an emotional response while the family still is attempting to settle into Australia and establish a new life. Do they experience feelings of divided loyalties and feel pulled in two directions?

It does not help that his aunt is appalled with their lifestyle in Australia, particularly the outside toilet that is unknown by then in Italy, even in rural towns. An outside toilet known as a “dunny” or “outhouse” was not uncommon in Australia in the 20th Century. It consisted of a small structure usually located at the back of the garden separate from the house containing either a bucket or long drop latrine. It often had a very unpleasant odour. The dunny became part of Australian folklore with the popular 1970s song *Redback on the Toilet Seat* that referred to the venomous Australian spiders that sometimes inhabited outside toilets. It seems that the aunt is not impressed with such Australian folklore, she finds it unimaginable and it serves to reinforce her negative opinion of life in Australia.

Mario considers Adelaide to be quite racist in those days and Italians have little integration into the community. Acknowledging that his comment may sound arrogant, Mario tells me that there is hardly anything they consider edible in the food stores and shops. Everything is “extremely alien” to the family. In response to this, his *Nonna* sends packages that he likens to a United Nations care program that includes traditional Italian food such as prosciutto on a hook. There is great excitement when the family opens the packages and sees the food, although it is a mystery to everyone how the parcels manage to get through the Australian customs service with its strict quarantine laws regarding the importation of food, and plant and animal products.

The aunt stays six months to try to convince them to return home to Italy. It must be a very tense time for everyone with arguments taking place on a daily basis reflected in Mario's comment that, "Every day was a battle". The family dig in their heels and refuse to return to Italy and eventually the aunt leaves clearly feeling embittered. Australia is to be the family's permanent home and they will not be returning to the life they knew in Italy. It is a milestone that cements Mario and his family's future and that of generations to come.

The family remains separated on two different continents but the absent *Nonna's* influence continues to be strong. "Her spirit remains" with them. The family refer to her in conversations and discuss what she would think and try to predict what she would do in certain circumstances. She has a great influence and the family wonder whether they would meet with her approval, especially Mario's mother who perhaps unsurprisingly, views *Nonna* as a role model. Occasionally, the family consult with the grandmother when making decisions during brief phone calls but most of the time they try to second-guess her opinion about what is the right thing to do.

This may have caused some inner turmoil for the family by trying to live up to expectations built on cultural values that sometimes do not apply in new cultural contexts. Just like attempts to replicate family trips to the Italian mountains in summer in the Adelaide hills, this is not always possible. What the family may not realise at the time is that all cultures evolve over time and their faithfulness to traditional Italian values, norms and traditions may no longer reflect the current situation in Italy. They may be clinging to archival traditions in a changing cultural landscape as a result of social and cultural changes in their original homeland.

Outsiders among insiders

Mario by then finds himself living in what he calls "a little weird Italian world in Australia". He describes it as "old-fashioned Italy" because he is surrounded by people who emigrated mainly in the 1950s from small villages and still are growing vegetables and keeping chickens in their backyards. Having come from Rome, a large vibrant capital city, his family feels that they have

little in common with the local Italian expatriate community. When they arrive in Australia, his parents are at the prime of their lives and consider themselves to be more sophisticated than the earlier Italian immigrants. Mario speaks proudly of his mother's ability to obtain a driver's license, a symbol to him of her worldliness and sophistication that few other Italian migrant women had yet attained.

While the family sees itself as somewhat different and apart from the rest of the expatriate community in the small Italian enclave, it is Mario's father who experiences the most difficulty and separation. Mario says his father quickly becomes very isolated because there are no like-minded people amongst the Italian expatriates. He scornfully calls them *zapatores* meaning earth diggers, although he himself is a bricklayer who only works for other Italians. Yet, he considers himself to be more sophisticated and intelligent. He feels that he cannot relate to them and rejects any opportunity to socialise with them. Adding to his isolation, he never learns English so he cannot communicate or develop relationships with Australians or with other non-Italian migrants.

He is effectively cut off from other local Italians because of their different social backgrounds and he is cut off from Australians because of his inability to speak and his refusal to learn English. He is restless and uncomfortable and the only time he appears to be happy with Australia is when he is in Italy where he is just as unhappy because at that time he is dreaming of living in Australia. Might we consider that his father is lost between his dreams and lost between two worlds? Mario concludes that his father is never happy in any place and is "a contradiction". He becomes dependent on his wife who, unlike him, learns English, can drive a car, obtains a job and "is very capable".

Regardless of these difficulties, the family manages to share some good times and laughs, with Mario recalling fond memories of his father whom he views as "a great wit. He is just not good with nurturing". As Mario is growing up he has strong female role models including his mother, his aunt and his grandmother in Italy. He is very comfortable around females and feels he was raised by a group or "committee", which is a strong part of his life. The family live together but his father often is not home or excuses himself from conversations and activities.

Sweating drops of blood: School days

As Mario describes his early days at school we can see that he identifies strongly with the country where he was born. He clearly remembers considering himself to be an Italian while at primary school. The World Cup Soccer competitions provide an ideal opportunity for the young boy to display his cultural allegiance to his country of birth. He watches the games with other boys of Italian background. They “barrack”, an Australian term meaning support, for the Italian team “speaking pigeon Italian” and wearing their team’s jackets to demonstrate to the world their allegiance to the Italian team. My own allegiance is shared between Australian, Polish and Latvian teams. We might wonder what draws our allegiance to sporting teams. Is it the team’s sporting prowess or a sense of having something in common that allows us to identify with a particular group over another, or in my case, three different groups?

Mario is proud to be Italian and, similar to other migrant groups, he uses “silly scornful” names for Australians like “kangaroos”. We may wonder why different ethnic groups make up slang names for others. Can we view it as a way of distinguishing themselves? Is it intended to be derogatory? Can we perceive the slang names as irreverent affectionate terms, since ethnic groups sometimes adopt the terms to describe themselves as well? Mario justifies his use of the term ‘Italian’ to describe himself because at least he was born in Italy whereas most of his friends were born in Australia and speak little Italian but it does not stop them calling themselves Italian. Their selective cultural identification and connection with their cultural roots is so strong that Mario and his young friends perceive it to be an insult and are offended if people consider them to be Australian. Are his friends aware of the irony of calling themselves Italian having been born in Australia and never setting foot in Italy?

Many teachers at Mario’s primary school are of an Italian background and seem to share the boys’ attitude but some teachers are quite hostile to the idea and challenge their allegiance. During the World Cup soccer competition, some of the teachers tell the young Italian supporters to support the Australian team since they live in Australia and therefore are Australians—highlighting the dichotomy between their self-identification and the identification perceived by others. Mario makes excuses and justifies his choice of allegiance by saying Australia has not yet qualified for the competition. It causes him to think that it is strange that someone should

question his loyalties. He begins to consider, “Where do my loyalties lie? Do I support Italy in all things?” For the first time in his life he starts to consider the notion of what we might consider divided loyalties.

Throughout his time in primary school and until Year 9 Mario considers himself to be Italian, associates with Italians and is proud of his Italian heritage to the extent that, on reflection, he realises that he does not want to leave the Italian community that he has known all his life in Australia and with which he has strong connections. We can see this when, in 1980, the family move to a new suburb because his father, who still maintains a negative attitude towards his in-laws, thinks his family is getting too close to his mother’s relatives and wants to retreat as far as possible by moving to a new undeveloped neighbourhood where there are still many fields but few amenities.

Mario finds it difficult to leave behind the close friendships and the sense of community that he enjoys in the old neighbourhood and he reminisces about the hot days when everyone would come outside in the evenings and sit in their front gardens. With great amusement, he describes that since there were no incinerators, people would burn rubbish on the ground and dispose of the ashes down the storm water drains. He describes it as “a community event” that helps to remind him of Rome. Picking fruit from trees growing in the suburbs is another community event Mario recalls that brings the Italian community together, creating happy childhood memories for him in Adelaide. It seems to build bonds with other migrant families as the sense of distance increases from relatives in Italy. Shared memories such as these that help to build relationships are not possible across the long distance and it means that Mario’s immediate family is not present as memories inevitably are being created in Italy. Might we consider the words “remember when” fall short and can even cause further distance in relationships between people when an experience is not shared?

The new suburb is very different and much more “anglicised” than where they had lived previously. The thought of breaking ties with his first community in Adelaide is so traumatic that Mario refuses to attend the local primary school because he feels it is “too Australian” and makes him feel out of place and awkward. We might wonder how Mario measures that the

school is “too Australian”. Is it the cultural background of the other students or teachers, or the way they look or act, or something else that leads him to that conclusion?

Mario’s sense of being an outsider is reinforced with the difficulty that teachers have pronouncing his name. Roll call is an extremely painful time for Mario. We can gain a sense of how much angst it causes him when he describes that he “sweats drops of blood” when a teacher pauses while calling out the student roll. He knows that his teacher has reached his name on the list and does not know how to pronounce his last name. Usually, to his great embarrassment, the teacher utters an incomprehensible version of his name, a phenomenon that seems to follow him all his life in Australia and continues to cause him consternation. Does the affectionate term “Mr D.” that he seems to accept from his students conjure unpleasant memories? Would he prefer to be addressed in the same manner as other teachers? Does the term continue to signify to him that he is perceived as being different?

After coping with the initial adjustment and transition from Italy, moving to a new suburb in Adelaide exposes old wounds again that feel even deeper than before. Mario is older and more acutely aware of his surroundings and that seems to contribute to his anxiety. The feeling of not fitting in is so strong that he describes the situation as worse than coming from Italy to Australia. He is removed from the security of his little familiar Italian community that he has settled into and to which he has become accustomed. He puts up a strong fight, reflecting the depths of his emotions and opposition—even locking his parents outside of the family home on one heated occasion. It is another difficult time for the family that leads to a long and bitter argument but this time Mario eventually wins. His parents agree to let him attend his original school with his Italian friends. After that the family settle into a new routine.

Mario is able to see his friends during the school day, but he feels very lonely. At his former home, he could go outside and play with his friends but in the new area there are no children of his age with whom to play. He considers the neighbours to be very Anglo-Saxon so the family have little to do with them and Mario does not want to play with the other children because they are not his age. Is this because of age or a perceived difference, or is it because of a language or cultural barrier? On reflection, Mario sees the possible benefits he may have enjoyed if he

attended the local school, as he probably would have made friends, although he remains ambivalent about the suburb.

After finishing primary school Mario maintains connections with his Italian friendship group by attending a local high school in the area that has a high proportion of students of Italian background. It could have been a time of consolidating his friendships. Middle school though, marks the beginning of a change in his friendship group as he starts making non-Italian friends that results in him noticing some contradictions in his life. He observes and reflects on his behaviour and that of his Italian friends and decides they are behaving in ignorance. It is a time of adolescent bravado and showing off, with some of his “more ignorant friends” involved in frequent fights between Italians and Australians. In Year 7 Mario perceives “the ridiculousness of it all” given that he now lives in Australia. He realises he is losing his Italian-ness and senses a change in his self-perception.

Family circumstances help to contribute to his change of attitude. By this time the family has very little communication with relatives back in Italy because of the high cost of international phone calls in those days. Technology that facilitates cheap and frequent communication over long distances has not been invented yet and often phone calls are limited to rushed conversations punctuated by his mother urgently saying, “You have three seconds to say hello to your *Nonna*”. Comments such as these place him under pressure and leave him not wanting to speak to his grandmother because she speaks very quickly and he cannot keep up with her Italian. Mario speaks with sadness when he says that he can no longer bear to communicate with her anymore, which is the beginning of the loss of communication with his wider family. At this point in Mario’s life the only connection he has with Italians is at school with other students.

While in middle school, the notion of identity that people with a cross-cultural background sometimes face begins to occupy his thoughts and doubts start to appear in his mind about who he is. He asks himself whether he is Italian or Australian and starts questioning whether he should feel embarrassed at keeping up what he describes as “this pretense”. This is underpinned by an uneasy feeling that “we were being ignorant and not all we were cracked up to be”. While he is reflecting on his identity in Year 9 “the whole Italian thing started fracturing a little bit”. It

is accentuated by most of his Italian friends leaving school and following their fathers' footsteps to take up a trade.

Like his friends, Mario wants to study a trade and become an electrician but his father has other aspirations for his son. He is embarrassed at being a labourer and feels the work that he is doing is beneath him but does it because he has no other options. This is often the case for people who do not speak the host country's language or cannot gain recognition for qualifications gained in other countries. In Australia, new migrants must apply to the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (Australian government, 2017) to have their prior learning and qualifications assessed. Overseas qualifications are not always recognised and additional study sometimes is required. There are more arguments between Mario and his father at home but this time his father refuses to give in and Mario completes his schooling albeit with a negative attitude. He remembers school as being "terrible and appalling". He does not want to be there and does not pay attention in class, yet over time his attitude changes.

Ironically, Mario eventually decides that he would like to become a teacher when he leaves school but his parents disagree with his choice since they do want him to leave home as many new teacher graduates are appointed to rural schools. Begrudgingly he submits to his parents' wishes and studies economics and finance at university. After graduating he spends ten years working in finance where he is not happy even though he considers it to be a good job. So strong are his feelings that he says he despises accounting and although he still has friends in the industry, he refuses to discuss or even reminisce about the time he worked there. After a decade Mario leaves the finance sector and completes a teaching degree—finally fulfilling his dream of becoming a teacher.

It is after Mario leaves school that he begins reacting to his "overt Italian-ness" influenced by his growing maturity and the new friends that he makes. He is well accepted and popular because he has a good sense of humour and can be disrespectful and irreverent. This makes it easier for Mario to make friends whereas he experienced trouble earlier during his adolescence. Major contradictions are becoming apparent to him as he and his Italian friends strongly identify with the sporting aspect of Australian culture while retaining ethnic links by supporting ethnic teams.

Mario talks about having an Australian friend with whom he works in finance who is a migrant from England. They form an immediate connection when they meet at work and he instantly feels close to his new workmate. His friend has lived and worked in several countries including Papua New Guinea and Ireland. He spent summers in France and moved to Australia after marrying a girl from Adelaide. Mario views his friend, like himself, as being effectively displaced so he takes it upon himself to take him under his wing. He even sponsors him to become an Australian citizen. Might we see this as somewhat ironic that Mario who is often torn about his identity is helping his friend to take on the citizenship of a new country?

The two men's friendship seems to be based on a shared understanding that overcomes their differences. Mario understands the difficulties associated with relocation and transition. Having faced them himself as a child he is able to "empathise with his experience despite him being Anglo-Saxon". Does this suggest a view that he experiences difficulty making friends with people from different cultures? Mario states that he is naturally inclined and gravitates to people with the same cultural mindsets. He describes himself as often the first person to introduce himself and help new people to integrate. Mario speaks of a desire to be popular and to have friends and be liked. His experience of moving against his will from Italy to Australia and to different suburbs seems to have left a lasting desire not to feel alone or left out. He has a fear and "hate" for the potential of isolation. It seems to result in him having empathy for people in similar circumstances and a willingness to support and help them so they do not experience similar feelings of loss, isolation and alienation.

On reflecting on his life, as a man in his 40s with a wife and three children, Mario speaks of not knowing or understanding how he followed this road that he describes as "the typical migrant story". He feels that the path he followed was probably largely conditioned by his upbringing. He says he married "an Italian girl" although Mario's wife was born in Australia. He thinks that it would feel "odd" if he had not married someone of an Italian background. He describes his father-in-law as a pillar of the Adelaide Italian community. Reflecting the close-knit Italian community in which he lives, he says his wife's cousin was his best man at their wedding. The other groomsman married his wife's sister and all the men who attended the primary school together continue to be best friends. Does this reflect the difficulty of breaking cultural influences or Mario's orientation to Italy?

Mario's links to his family and the Italian community remain strong after his marriage. He and his wife and children live in a suburb where there are many Italian migrants and people of Italian heritage. His mother and sister reside within walking distance from his house and he tells me that he would not dream of leaving Adelaide. Has Mario unconsciously sought and replicated the communal feeling of the compound in Rome where he first lived that reflected the collectivist nature of the Italian culture where the focus is on the group rather than individuals (Hofstede, 1986, p. 307)? His strong attachment to his mother is evident when Mario says that he could never leave the suburb as "it would kill me to leave my mother" like his parents left his *Nonna*.

The prodigal son returns

It is 20 years after leaving Rome on his first trip back to Italy in 1996, at the age of 27 and accompanied by his wife, that finally shatters Mario's long held images of his family in Italy and helps him to address the notion of his own identity. The visit does not go as he anticipates and he is surprised to sense a distinct lack of warmth from the relatives that he has longed to see again after so many years. His family seems like strangers and everything feels completely foreign to him. Mario is extremely disappointed because he thinks he will be viewed as the prodigal son returning home. He anticipates a warm welcome, a figurative killing of the fattened cow of the Parable of the Prodigal Son in the Bible, but his family in Italy have moved on in their lives by this stage. Until that visit, Mario has lived all his life under the illusion that the lives of the family members back in Italy are permanently shattered by their departure, remembering his aunt's visit to Australia many years before. He describes it as "a real slap in the face" when he realises that this is not the case.

His aunt has a daughter and he and his sister are no longer the only niece and nephew, making him feel that they have been displaced and forgotten. Mario has lived under "a cosy delusion" that he and his sibling are still the centre of the lives of their family in Italy. He stays with his relatives for seven weeks but it is an unhappy homecoming with language being a major barrier that leads to difficulty communicating with his family. He is frustrated that he can only communicate on a basic level and cannot get his personality across because of his limited Italian. His Italian was quite good but has deteriorated since his father's death two years earlier. All his

life he dreams of returning to Rome but the reality is that it feels to him like a different Italy. “I feel completely a fish out of water”, he says. The disconnect between his memories and reality, and his ability to function in the new environment become poignantly obvious to him.

The effect on Mario seems to be profound. He returns to Australia and considers for the first time that, “I am not Italian”. Perhaps surprisingly, instead of being disappointed or upset by this revelation, Mario begins to feel happy to have been raised in Australia and to truly value the life he has there. Until that time, he thinks emigrating has been a terrible mistake. He still believes it was a retrograde step for his mother who he thinks would have lived her life in a more nurturing environment with her family in the compound in Rome.

Mario and his wife are accompanied on the trip by his wife’s brother and sister-in-law who come from Calabria, which he describes as “deep dark Italy”. Interestingly, Mario returns perceiving himself as an Australian, whereas his brother-in-law comes back feeling “completely Italian”, so much so that he finds living in Australia difficult and wants to emigrate to Italy. Mario ascribes the different reactions after the visit to family connections and language. His brother-in-law’s family maintains close contact with family in Italy as they are growing up. They come from a large tight community where hundreds of people gather for large activities and many of the people in the village are related. In contrast, Mario’s family in Rome does not have such a strong network. His cousin’s family speaks Italian at home, while Mario speaks English with his mother. He only speaks Italian to his father because language is his means of cultural and inter-relational connectedness with him.

After the visit Mario becomes aware that he has quite a different mindset from Italians. He adopts the view that Italian people are sly and that their culture is corrupt. He even begins using derogatory language that his father uses to describe Italians. He feels the way that they behave is “quite repulsive”. People pushing and shoving and not apologising for their rudeness and loudness offend him. He describes them as “loud, pushy, scheming liars and cheats” and cites the example of a vendor charging him twice the correct amount for an ice cream. He is enraged at the time and challenges the vendor who then makes it look like it is Mario’s fault and that he is being difficult. It leads Mario to believe that the Australian way of life and way of thinking are superior and that Australia is a much “clearer” and fairer society. This incident and others, make

Mario realise that he has adopted Australian norms and values. In time, he develops a different perspective and considers people in Italy have a hard life with different values and the way that they act is their strategy for adapting to and coping with the situation. In fact, he comes to admire them for their flexibility and resilience.

Putting aside the disappointment of his first visit, Mario returns to Italy for a second time in 2009 accompanied this time by his mother. We can imagine her excitement after the long absence and the fraught circumstances in which she left. Might we also feel empathy for her when, to her surprise, she too feels Italy is no longer her country? Is it because she deems that Italy has changed? Is it perhaps that she herself has changed and does not realise it? She decides during the visit that after years of longing to return to Italy she does not want to return there ever again, either to visit or to live. On the other hand, Mario's second visit results in a much more positive experience that helps him to gain a different perspective.

Reflecting on his first visit back to Italy he says he believes that despite his age and the fact that he was married, he was still very immature in his thought processes. He says he was very hostile to the family because they did not meet his expectations. The second time he experiences a deeper understanding of what he witnesses that changes his opinions about Italy and Italian people. What he first saw as Italian loudness, he comes to view as spontaneity. He now considers the shortcuts that he sees people take instead of following established rules to be signs of creativity. He learns to admire and respect the Italian people's will to survive in what he perceives to be a brutal society with few safety networks. He respects that they have created their own rules and unwritten laws. He makes a greater effort to get along with his family this time and seems to understand and accept that his family's lives have moved on. He begins to interest himself in the things that they are doing rather than expect them to indulge him in understanding his interests.

Stilted conversations: When words fail us

Mario regards the Italian language as a connection to his cultural heritage and identity and it appears that the language is deeply ingrained in him and comes to the forefront during moments of intense stress. He provides a poignant example of a time he is walking along the side of a busy road with his family when his young son suddenly steps out onto the road in front of coming traffic. At that moment of urgency and panic, Mario shouts out to his son in Italian. It surprises Mario because he only speaks English with his children and, in his fright, he has reverted to an old word in the Italian dialect that he has not heard for many years. Not only is the incident distressing, he is taken aback by his own reaction. He does not know where the word arises from and feels “completely disarmed” by his unexpected reversion to Italian. Is it the innate response of a father to a life-threatening risk to his son that reaches to the core of his being? If so, can we interpret this as a sign that the core of Mario’s being resides in his first language and his Italian upbringing?

There have been other times in his life when certain circumstances trigger a reaction such as a word, trait or mannerism from “by-gone days” that seemingly come from nowhere with no conscious thought. Are there hidden elements of a culture that reside in us even after cultural integration and adopting aspects of a new culture? In some ways though Mario muses, perhaps they are in fact conscious acts because he wants to keep up being Italian. He is attracted to the idea of having his own “Renaissance” and considers the idea of joining Italian language classes. He tries to maintain his level of Italian by speaking to his mother and his wife in the language when he does not want others around them to understand what he is saying. It gives him a certain sense of satisfaction that he can speak a language that others cannot understand. Is it his way of reversing the roles of insider and outsider? Is it his way of giving others a taste of what it feels like to be excluded?

Language, an essential foundation upon which relationships are built, also creates a barrier between Mario and his father since his father speaks almost no English. Communication between them is of necessity, perfunctory and somewhat superficial, and Mario cannot express his innermost thoughts or engage in deep and meaningful conversations with his father. This creates distance between them, similar to the experience he had with his *Nonna*. He feels the loss

of connection even more when he is older, while they are still living together in the same house and later, after his marriage, when he visits his father. The language barrier continues to cause Mario feelings of sadness even after his father's death. He tells me it is one of reasons that he wants to retain his ability to speak Italian so it can bring him closer to the memory of his father.

It is with great sorrow and regret that he considers that his father never appreciated the person he became and that in his father's eyes, because of his language immaturity, he always remained as a young child. This results in Mario living with a strong sense of guilt and uneasiness that he is never able to fully develop his relationship with his father. He blames himself for not making the effort to improve his Italian language skills. It appears to be an emotional burden that weighs heavily on Mario. He seems to consider that it was his responsibility to maintain and develop his mother tongue to facilitate communication with his father without any criticism of his father's refusal to learn English. Is this because he sees it as his duty to his father? Or is it a sense of guilt or betrayal of his culture because he did not make efforts to retain his first language?

The Living Years, Mike and the Mechanics



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hr64MxYpgk>

Access to this video clip may be restricted in some countries, but the reader will find the sentiments as the lyrics flow below.

Every generation
Blames the one before
And all of their frustrations
Come beating on your door

I know that I'm a prisoner
To all my Father held so dear
I know that I'm a hostage
To all his hopes and fears
I just wish I could have told him in the living years

Oh, crumpled bits of paper
Filled with imperfect thoughts
Stilted conversations
I'm afraid that's all we've got
You say you just don't see it

He says it's perfect sense
You just can't get agreement
In this present tense
We all talk a different language
Talking in defence

Say it loud (say it loud), say it clear (oh say it clear)
You can listen as well as you hear
It's too late (it's too late) when we die (oh when we die)
To admit we don't see eye to eye

So we open up a quarrel
Between the present and the past
We only sacrifice the future
It's the bitterness that lasts ...

I wasn't there that morning
When my Father passed away
I didn't get to tell him
All the things I had to say

I think I caught his spirit
Later that same year
I'm sure I heard his echo
In my baby's new born tears
I just wish I could have told him in the living years ...

In the Living Years was released in 1988 and is a ballad about a son's relationship with his father. The song, written by two songwriters, draws on their own personal lived experiences and reactions after they both had recently lost their fathers. Mike Rutherford who co-wrote and sang the song with his band Mike and the Mechanics had a strained relationship with his father who had been a naval Captain in the British Royal Navy. It seems that his father set many rules and regulations against which Rutherford rebelled.

Much to his father's disappointment, he was expelled from school. His father was so disappointed and angry with his son's behaviour that he banned him from playing the guitar but Rutherford disobeyed his father. It was a difficult relationship between father and son with many disagreements and conflicts. It was not until Rutherford's father passed away and he found his father's memoirs that he gained a deeper insight into his father's character. He was surprised to find that he was very much like his father and this contributed to his emotional turmoil as he reflected on the broken relationship.

I know that I'm a prisoner
To all my Father held so dear
I know that I'm a hostage
To all his hopes and fears

This song explores many issues that seem to characterise Mario's relationship with his father and that resulted in frequent arguments and lack of communication and understanding, reflected in the words,

You say you just don't see it
He says it's perfect sense
You just can't get agreement
In this present tense

Mario's inability to effectively convey his thoughts and personality to his father because of his limited Italian language is a source of sadness for him. "We all talk a different language" and

“Stilted conversations” seem to mirror Mario’s relationship with his father. The song laments the passing of Rutherford’s father and their unresolved relationship with a poignant message that we might consider reflects Mario’s feelings at not having made greater efforts to get to know his father and to resolve their issues. Mario regards his father as a difficult man who never seemed to fit in anywhere but as Mario describes his life story it appears that he loved him and longed to have been closer with him. We see that it evokes feelings in him of great sadness, regret, guilt and a sense of missed opportunities. It leads him to honour his father who was a proud Roman by striving to maintain his Italian heritage and language.

The image in the video of the choir singing in the church introduces a spiritual element into this song that reminds us of the passing of the singer’s father and Mario’s father. We might wonder if the issue between father and son, although not resolved in this life may be resolved in another life. The image of Rutherford and his son walking together in the countryside leads us to consider what kind of relationship Rutherford has with his own son. What effect did the tensions he experienced with his father influence his relationship with his own son? Had the relationship he had with his father helped to prevent his son from being a hostage to Rutherford’s “hopes and fears”? We may ask whether Mario’s relationship with his father affects his relationship with his own son.

Mario is not sure how he learned to speak Italian as he only attended school in Italy for one term but knowledge of Italian language continues to be important to him. He yearns to be able to keep in touch with relatives in Italy where he hopes to return frequently and he sees language as an essential tool. It gives him great pleasure to read Roman guide books written in Italian that he purchased on one of his visits as it provides him with an opportunity to practise the language. As a first generation Australian, Mario’s wife can speak Italian but they do not speak Italian with their three children and do not insist they, in turn, speak the language.

His 13-year-old daughter has limited Italian having learned it at school by chance, as it is the only language offered at her primary school. Can we view this as a reflection of the family living in an Italian enclave as schools often select to teach the local community languages as the second language? Neither of his two sons, aged 7 and 9, speak Italian and this does not cause any consternation for Mario as he considers it to be their decision if they want to learn Italian. He is

satisfied that the children can communicate with their grandmother, Mario and his wife in English without difficulty.

Yobbos, barbarians and wogs: Us and them

Highlighting the difficulty that some members of host cultures have accepting new migrants and people different from themselves, as he is growing up, Mario experiences racism directed towards himself, his family and his friends. One particularly unpleasant occasion takes place at the local petrol station when he is still a young boy. While his father is filling the car with petrol a stranger makes an insulting comment directed at him. Since he cannot understand English, and does not know what is said, he continues smiling. Mario understands the hurtful comment but does not explain it to his father because he wants to protect him from embarrassment and pain.

We can imagine how heart wrenching it must be for the young boy to see his father demeaned and vilified in such a way, especially since Mario's father considers himself to be a highly intelligent and sophisticated man from a cosmopolitan city. While he may be cultured and well-read, due to his inability to speak English, he does not have the knowledge or ability to understand or respond to the insult by the person whom Mario calls a "yobbo", an Australian slang term used to describe a loud or uncultured person. "It is as if he has been thrown into a den of barbarians", is the metaphor that Mario uses to describe what he considers his father endures by coming to Australia.

Another incident takes place when Mario is about 30 years of age while he is at a fast food restaurant with his Italian friends. By this time, they are young adults who consider themselves to be part of the Australian community. They speak English fluently and are much more comfortable about their identity. While they are at the restaurant "someone out of the blue calls out 'wog'", a derogatory and offensive term sometimes used in Australia against Italians and Greeks. This unexpected remark takes the group by surprise to such an extent that they are not even certain that the comment is addressed towards them until they notice the perpetrator looking at them.

By this stage Mario and his friends have moved on from their early Italian centric perceptions of themselves so much so that they think they have almost completely lost their Italian-ness. They are shocked to be perceived this way by others and that this kind of vilification still occurs. It reminds me of the occasion when I told someone I had just met about my cultural background to which the person responded by calling me a ‘wog’. It felt like a slap in the face and it is not a term that is used to describe people of Central European descent. I was no longer comfortable talking to that person and moved on, highlighting the impact that just one word can have. Was I being oversensitive? Was it intended to be a slight against me? I do not know but I vividly recall the comment and its effect on me. Todres might interpret these reactions as examples of a Narcissus’ strategy where others are used as a mirror of the ideal self and “one may feel deeply insulted when others do not help one to feed oneself with one’s own desired image” (2004, p. 6). Or can we simply view it as an aversion to derogatory comments or name-calling?

Another surprising revelation occurs after Mario becomes a teacher and broadens his social cultural circle and perspectives. He is shocked to see in schools some of the dynamics that he left behind such as tensions between different ethnic groups and gangs of ethnic youths. He is dismayed that the younger generation still encounters many of the same issues of identity, acceptance and integration that he has faced in his life. As a teacher and a person with a cross-cultural childhood, he holds the view that schools should provide safe environments, free from bullying and harassment and refrain from trying to engage in what he calls “social engineering ... You can’t make Australians at school because people become Australians anyway”. He believes that the traits, norms and values of the host culture invariably influence people’s development as they consciously and unconsciously adopt social norms, values and behaviours over time simply through immersion in the host culture.

Mario sees little value in practices that he describes as “flagpole routines” and is highly critical of schools that insist students speak English all the time while at school. He strongly believes that schools should not insist students be a certain way but that they should help make them functional in their new environment by supporting the development of their language skills. He believes students can then become independent thinkers who can behave in their chosen way. He does not think it is possible to define or create an Australian and views himself as an example of an Australian albeit he appears to remain somewhat conflicted about what that actually means

to him. In his maturity he seems to be coming into a certain wisdom that reflects his understanding of his personal cross-cultural experience.

A “fair go” versus the Italian way: Cultural norms and values

It is very important to Mario to maintain his cultural traditions and he finds it ironic that, like his father who views jingoism and patriotism as “the last refuge of the scoundrel” he too does not like overt displays of nationalism. He finds it embarrassing to see Italian paraphernalia and people wearing clothes with icons printed on them. He considers it to be “vulgar” and only worn by the “uneducated”. Reflecting how much his thinking has changed since his youth, he describes nationalistic chanting at soccer matches as an example of “borderline racism” that reflects poorly on all ethnic groups including Australians and Italian supporters. Mario views being Italian as being elegant and subtle, not tasteless, revealing his perception of the Italian culture.

Like my family and many of us with cross-cultural experiences who follow family traditions rooted in their respective cultures, Mario continues to celebrate Christmas and Easter in what he calls “a stereotypical way”. This involves family meals with excessive amounts of food and attending Midnight Mass with his mother. While he lives at home, his family attends dinner dances with Italian music at the Calabria Club and he plays *bocce*, a traditional Italian game.

As a married man with his own family, Mario incorporates and adopts cultural values and norms from the two dominant cultures in his life. Similarly, in my home we variously now follow Australian, Polish and English customs. He says that he only respects and follows the rules that he thinks have meaning. He believes he is more flexible and adaptable than people from a non-Italian background. As a teacher, he follows the school rules that he thinks are important and side steps those he considers to be unnecessary or detrimental. He seems to use his cultural background as a license to do things his own way saying, “It’s okay to take a slight detour. It’s the Italian way”.

Mario prefers to follow the spirit of the rule rather than adhere to the letter of the law even if it causes problems for himself if he feels that it results in “a purer outcome”. He believes this is a uniquely Italian approach that is different from Australian values. Seemingly to apply his own measure of the value of cultural norms and behaviours, he views certain Anglo-Saxon mainstream values as “overly stuffy, officious, inflexible and small-minded” and that these traits are contrary to the stereotypical Australians. These comments do not appear to stem from a cultural imperialistic view but perhaps are based on his opinion of the merits of some traits because of his experiences and observations in Italy and Australia.

He thinks the element of creativity is more prevalent in the Italian culture and less evident in the Australian culture. While he acknowledges that adherence to norms leads to a safe society he considers that it promotes a “dull society”. He views the reliability and predictability of systems, values and actions in Australia as leading to confidence that everything works but creates a “stultifying mindset”. Recognising the merits of both approaches, he describes the Italian method as consisting of “a little of mainstream order and the vibrancy of what makes up the Italian culture”.

There are some Australian values that he regards more highly, such as the value of fairness and in this regard, he feels that he clearly is not Italian. While many of us may view fairness as an admirable quality, Mario makes a point of distinguishing the cultural view of fairness between the Italian and Australian culture. To illustrate his point, he describes injustices that his family members in Italy experience in the workplace because of the “informal black economy” when his cousin is summarily dismissed from a job because of nepotism by his employer. He believes it is unfair that someone should win a position based on personal connections rather than merit. He considers it unfair that old age pensions in Italy are based on the length of time in previous employment rather than age. He admires what he calls the Italian people’s spirit in the face of their difficulties describing the “brilliant way” they enjoy themselves with simple pleasures, such as eating breakfast at the patisserie.

To return or to remain: Gratitude and guilt

For many years Mario views the family's migration to Australia in a negative light believing that they lost much as a consequence of the move. He often ponders what would have happened and what his life would be like if his family had stayed in Italy. Would he be better off? Would he be happier? Often the answers to his ruminations are "yes" after which he is immediately filled with strong feelings of guilt because his parents, particularly his mother, have sacrificed so much for him and his sister with their move to Australia.

As he reflects over the years his opinion wavers about the family's migration to Australia. There is a time when he feels reconciled with the idea that he has gained more from the experience but he finally concludes that he has lost more than he has gained. His view is that his parents did not benefit at all from the move. His father appears to regret every minute and his mother never accepts living in Australia. He believes his mother would have had a better life in Italy surrounded and supported by family members—this he seems to view as more valuable than the material benefits she acquired in Australia. Emotional well-being appears to be one of the key criterion Mario uses to assess whether the family has gained or lost from the experience. Issues that we explore in Chapters 7 and 8—family pressures, loss of family ties, identity issues, sense of alienation, loss of the Italian language and culture, and his perception of the richness and vibrancy of the Italian lifestyle—result in negative feelings. Would they have experienced family pressures if they had stayed in Italy? What would his relationship have been like with his *Nonna*, aunt, and cousins if they had remained in Italy?

Mario seems to experience much difficulty with his notion of patriotism and his feelings of divided loyalties depending on which country he identifies with more strongly. When he identifies with his Italian side he experiences feelings of guilt. He feels that he is being ungrateful for his life in Australia and that he should appreciate more the opportunities and lifestyle that he enjoys there. The occasions when he identifies more strongly with his Australian side he feels guilty that he is "cutting loose" from family and people back in Italy and memories of his late father. He describes his sense of in-between-ness as, "I don't feel I belong here nor there. I feel out of place in Italy because I do not feel fully Italian, yet when I am there I act as they do".

So strong is Mario's focus on his cross-cultural world that he expresses no interest in seeing other countries even though his wife is keen to visit countries in Asia. "I don't factor in the rest of the world. I don't have any interest in the rest of the world. There is nothing there to see. I only want to go back to Rome," he says. The longing for his birth country appears to reside deep within him. A previous trip to New Zealand and travel within Australia do not ignite a desire to travel to other destinations. A great holiday to Mario means going back to Italy. Nothing will make him choose going anywhere else even though it is a large financial commitment for him.

As a family unit Mario and his sister remain ambivalent about their cross-cultural experience while Mario retains a longing to return to Italy to live one day, at least on a short-term basis. His wife is not interested in this notion but a cousin of his spends six months living in Italy and six months in Australia—of which Mario is very envious. It appears to him that his cousin is able to "keep his foot in both camps and have the best of both worlds", highlighting the strong effect of family ties and culture on him. Even though Mario reaches the conclusion that Italy is not the centre of his world, he retains a feeling that it is partly home and yet he understands that Australia is now his permanent home. He enjoys the ambience he experiences in Italy. He states, "It is good to walk around and touch base with people left there and in memory of my late father I make an effort to do so". He speaks of his reverting to semi-native Italian ways when in Italy as being beyond his control and reveals that while there he unconsciously displays certain mannerisms and modes of behaviour.

A complicated life: Creating a cultural oasis

Mario becomes an Australian citizen in his early 20s. He applies for citizenship because he is applying for employment in the public service, which requires Australian citizenship. He carefully investigates the requirements and conditions before finally deciding to opt for dual citizenship that reflects his legal status as well as his self-identification and cultural outlook. Retaining his Italian citizenship is of such importance to him that he is not sure what he would have done if he had been required to renounce it. The legitimisation of his identity is of crucial importance to him and validates his own cultural orientation. "Who am I? I am an evolving person and I think about it a lot", he declares.

Mario talks about being proud of his Italian background that he describes as “the beautiful language and culture”. His father is very proud of his Roman-ness and talks a great deal about the building of the Roman Empire, Christendom and the Renaissance movement. Mario feels superior because of his heritage and feels deeply that he will always be proud of his cultural background. He believes Italians have a genetic superiority and he comes from “people of genius”. Although he says he does not consider himself personally to be a genius, he believes it is a strain in the race that is noticeable and he provides a long list of famous inventions by Italians to support his view. History has taught us that this kind of attitude can be dangerous—leading to conflict and genocide—although it appears to me that Mario’s comment is based on a simple sense of pride.

He jokes with his non-Italian friends that their ancestors were building mud huts while his ancestors were building the Pantheon and, while he is joking, he believes that there is some element of truth in the statement. Mario feels he is descended from a proud, noble line and that he benefits from a magnificent culture and a legacy that he lives with daily. It appears that it is not just pride that he feels. He maintains that this legacy confers an obligation upon him “to honour my past and live up to it. Not to be a yobbo but to try and be cultured and well-read, to consciously try to rise above what is considered to be base behaviour and attitudes and aspire to higher standards”.

Mario’s knowledge of Italian and European history and architecture is greater than his knowledge of Australia where he lives. He realises that he has an Eurocentric focus. While having an appreciation that other cultures have much to offer, on an emotional level, he feels Italy and Europe are much more interesting but he does not think it would work out well if he moved to Italy because he feels that he no longer fully belongs there. He is content to stay in the suburb he has chosen and describes as a place “between worlds—a strange little area in Adelaide between Italy and Australia”.

Mario consciously creates his own cultural oasis and displays intentionality by customising his home and creating an environment that expresses both sides of his character. van Manen tells us, “Intentionality describes how humans are always tied to the world by constituting their world” (2016, p. 234). Mario says his Italian personality is reflected in his home. He has a large house

and shed on a big allotment, shunning the more contemporary courtyard homes that are popular in Adelaide. He grows vegetables and keeps chickens and pets that are common amongst other Italian households and that he feels reflects his upbringing. On the other hand, the Australian side of his personality at home is evident in his love of archetypal Australian sports such as Australian Rules Football, tennis and cricket that he enjoys playing with his sons.

Mario says he is happy for his children to choose for themselves later in life if they want to travel overseas or explore their roots. He tells me his 13-year-old daughter has already independently developed a strong worldview and all his children have an appreciation of history and talk about travel. Searching for self across the Australian and Italian culture landscape has been a major aspect of Mario's life. It seems to be reflected in the constant soul-searching, reflection and longing that has accompanied his life.

"My Italian-ness makes me feel unique even though there are 65 million Italians in the world", he states. On reflecting on his cross-cultural journey, he describes himself as having developed from "an ignorant Italian to a hostile Australian to a balanced Ito-Australian, an evolving person". Mario believes that living between two cultures has enriched his life. Perhaps we can consider it has also been a considerable burden to him highlighted by his comment regarding his children, "It will simplify their lives if this feeling ends with me. It's an ache. It's complicated".

My Way, Andrea Bocelli



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFfunARTAQo&sns=em>

And now, the end is here
And so I face the final curtain
My friend, I'll say it clear
I'll state my case, of which I'm certain
I've lived a life that's full
I traveled each and ev'ry highway
And more, much more than this, I did it my way

Regrets, I've had a few
But then again, too few to mention
I did what I had to do and saw it through without exemption
I planned each charted course, each careful step along the byway
And more, much more than this, I did it my way ...

I've loved, I've laughed and cried
I've had my fill, my share of losing
And now, as tears subside, I find it all so amusing
To think I did all that
And may I say, not in a shy way,
Oh no, oh no, not me, I did it my way

For what is a man, what has he got?
If not himself, then he has naught

To say the things he truly feels and not the words of one who kneels
The record shows I took the blows and did it my way

Andrea Bocelli is a renowned Italian tenor who has enjoyed great popularity in Italy and around the world singing in English, Italian, and other languages. His music and voice seem to be filled with passion and emotion and create a sense of Italy for which Mario has such a strong longing. *My Way* is based on a French song called *Comme D'Habitude*, As Usual, written by Jacques Revaux and Gilles Thibault. Originally recorded by French singer Claude François in 1967, it became popular after the words were translated and revised by Canadian singer and songwriter Paul Anka, and recorded by American singer Frank Sinatra. It has become an iconic song that we can perhaps regard as a statement of individuality, freedom, and defiance by living life according to one's own rules and codes rather than other people's expectations.

My Way not only strongly reminds us of Italy but seems to reflect Mario's approach to life. He has reflected deeply on his life story and made conscious decisions about how he chooses to live his life, echoed in the words of the song,

I planned each charted course,
each careful step along the byway
And more, much more than this
I did it my way

We can see this most clearly in the way Mario has created his own cultural oasis by fusing elements of the Italian and Australian culture into his home that have been strong influences on him. For this reason, the video showing Bocelli singing and playing the piano at home is fitting. The words, "I've loved, I've laughed and cried, I've had my fill, my share of losing, And now, as tears subside, I find it all so amusing" remind us that it has been a challenging journey for Mario and that he has some regrets as he speaks of "an ache" he carries. The ocean scenes in the video remind us that Mario traversed land and sea with his migration to Australia and he is separated by great distances from his country of birth and his adopted home. Mario's life story and progression from "an ignorant Italian to a hostile Australian to a balanced Ito-Australian" suggests that he really "did it my [his] way".

Chapter 5 – A KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOURS AND CULTURES: HOLLY

At the time of this inquiry, Holly is an 18-year-old international student coming towards the end of her final year of schooling as a boarder at a private all girls' day and boarding school in Australia. As Vice Principal of the school my role includes responsibility for overseeing the boarding house and coordinating the International Club, a co-curricular activity that fosters global perspectives, intercultural awareness and friendships between international and Australian students. Holly is both a boarder and a member of the International Club that meets on a weekly basis providing me with many opportunities to get to know her personally. We develop a friendship and enjoy each other's company within professional parameters largely due to our common interest in different cultures.

I meet Holly when she first joins the school at the end of Year 7 when she is 12 years of age. From the outset, she makes a positive impression on everyone that she meets through her warm personality, outgoing nature, eagerness to become involved in all aspects of school life, and her avid interest in people and other cultures. It is interesting to see her develop over the five years that she attends the school from a child who is eager to learn, keen to be accepted and make new friends to a mature, self-assured young woman who becomes a school leader and role model for other students. Over the years that Holly attends the school, she forms close relationships with students, especially other boarders, and endears herself to staff—leaving a lasting impression on all who have the pleasure to know her.

Holly's life experiences fit the category of a Third Culture Kid, the reason for her selection in this inquiry, in which she eagerly agrees to participate. The following is based on three separate one-to-one conversations during which Holly shares with us her recollections of her life story.

Leaving South Korea for an intercultural journey

Holly is born in South Korea to parents who are South Korean nationals. She is the eldest of three children and has two younger sisters. It appears that she develops an orientation towards internationalism and interculturalism very early in her life, most likely precipitated by a conversation with her parents when she is 6 years of age, which results in her living abroad alone from the age of 11. She describes her family as a “typical Korean family” and herself as an “ordinary kid” living in South Korea. Her parents have never travelled to another country. All the members of her immediate and extended family have lived in South Korea all their lives and only speak Korean except for one uncle who emigrated to the United States. Holly never meets this uncle and does not have any contact with him or her cousins living there. She says that she does not consider those cousins as being Korean because they were born in the United States. We can perhaps glean from this comment that she associates country of birth with a person’s identity.

It appears that a defining moment in Holly’s cross-cultural journey takes place just after her sixth birthday when her parents discuss with her different cultures and the possibility of her studying abroad. She says that her parents hold the view, like many other South Koreans, that English is a universal language and proficiency in it is essential for desirable job opportunities and a better future. She explains that while English is taught in South Korean schools, it generally is considered to be at a basic level so many children receive additional private English tuition or seek other opportunities to learn English.

Holly’s father is a successful architect. He helps to design a hotel in South Korea working with international business partners—this involves him interacting with people from different countries and cultural backgrounds. She perceives that it helps her father to appreciate the importance of being able to speak English. While we may view the most likely motivating factor to be of a utilitarian nature—the importance of English language proficiency for future employment, interestingly, an opportunity presents itself to Holly to experience other cultures and develop an international orientation. Her parents ask her,

Would you like to explore different cultures? You are still young. You can choose your own life. Where would you like to go if you have a choice ignoring all the stories about which is the best school?

As she reflects on these comments Holly considers it to be an “odd conversation” to be having with her parents at such a young age and an “odd question” but attributes it to them being “unique people”. She does not know what she wants to do but reacts positively and becomes excited about living in another country. Still very young but appearing to display maturity beyond her age, Holly commences her own research using newspapers and the Internet. At the age of 6, she eventually chooses India as the country where she would like to study because she “is fascinated with how different it is”.

Speaking fondly of her strong interest in clothing and fashion, she says she is extremely impressed with the fact that in India even teenagers often prefer to wear traditional Indian clothing such as saris and Punjabi suits in their everyday lives. India also appeals to her because “everything is so westernised in South Korea. In Korea, people only wear traditional dress on special occasions like Thanksgiving or New Year’s Eve”. Unwittingly, the example Holly provides of the type of clothes worn during South Korean celebrations, shows the westernisation of Korean culture even more than she perhaps intends since Thanksgiving is a tradition that originated in the United States.

Holly’s research involves her comparing the South Korean culture with other cultures and the more research she conducts, the more she becomes fascinated with India. The contrast between the South Korean and Indian culture attracts her. She talks about being drawn by the visible differences between the two cultures that seems to reflect anthropologist Gary Weaver’s concept of the cultural iceberg as described by Pollock and Van Reken who explain,

looking at culture as a kind of iceberg: one portion is clearly above the surface of the water, while the much larger chunk of ice is hidden below. The part above can be considered *surface culture*—what we can see or hear, including behaviour, words, customs, language, and tradition. Underneath the water, invisible to all, is the *deep culture*. This place includes our beliefs, values, assumptions, worldview, and thought processes. (2009, p. 42)

Holly's comments suggest she is at that time focusing on the surface level of the cultural iceberg that often is referred to as the 5 F's of culture—festivals, food, fashion, folklore, and famous people. Her subsequent description of her life in India and her experiences that lead to her understanding of different Indian beliefs and values reveals that it is not until she lives there that she gains a greater insight into the deeper aspects of the cultural iceberg.

Another key element of the Indian culture that attracts Holly is that it appears to her to be less influenced by other cultures and “is untouched by other countries, particularly Western influence”. She says, “India is just India, not so much touched by other countries”. She seems to be drawn to the diversity of cultures in their purest and undiluted forms. This is consistent with Pollock and Van Reken's view that children with a cross-cultural childhood often are interested in other cultures (2009, p. 95). As she conducts her research, she becomes aware of cultural differences and the effect of interaction between people of different cultures. She says she is conscious that she feels very “Americanised” while growing up in South Korea due to the influence of media, particularly television and fashion magazines. Contrary to many of her friends in South Korea who perceive all Western cultures to be alike, she recognises that not all Western or Asian cultures are the same and she does not hold a positive view of the westernisation of Korean culture.

Holly is pleasantly surprised when her parents agree to her studying in India. Although their response is unexpected, it seems consistent with her parents' original question as to which culture she would like to explore. We might view it as their openness to other cultures. The acquisition of English as the motive for studying abroad may have been secondary since India is a diverse country and English is one of the official government languages. She surmises that her parents probably want her to explore different cultures and environments without a strong Western or Korean influence when they tell her that they want her to live in a country where there are few Koreans, unlike some Western countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia where there are significant numbers of Koreans.

Her conclusions are substantiated when, after she returns from India, her father shares with her his real reason for allowing her to go there. He says, “The reason for sending you to India to learn English was just an excuse. If I really wanted you to learn English, I would definitely have

sent you to Canada or America or New Zealand where they speak English as their first language”. Her father tells her he thinks it is more important “to see different cultures and absorb the whole culture before just focusing on learning language”. She understands this to mean that her father does not want her to just learn the language or view it as the most important aspect of studying abroad. She concludes that her father holds an intercultural orientation and appreciation of other cultures and wants to pass it on to her. Is this in part stimulated by his own experiences working with people from different cultural backgrounds or is it prompted by other factors? As her story unfolds Holly often speaks of “absorbing culture”, a term her father uses, suggesting that she has adopted her father’s attitude.

Dancing to a different tune: Life in India

At the age of 11, Holly moves to India where she attends an international boarding school located in a rural part of southern India. When she leaves South Korea, and is physically separated from her parents, she tells me she “feels excited, like I am going on a camping trip. I am not sad, just going to learn”. She seems to display a greater maturity than most children of her age who perhaps would have difficulty with the separation and be reluctant to leave. It is in India that Holly’s cross-cultural journey begins as she meets, lives and studies with a wide variety of people from different countries, both students and adults.

Most of the expatriates are from other Asian countries including China, Japan, Thailand and Singapore. There are few other Korean students and only one Western student from England. Holly is very excited when she arrives in India and laughs when she tells me, “I feel like a superstar as all these other students ask where I am from”. She is filled with wonder and curiosity and says it is the differences that first catch her attention in the new environment. Is she becoming consciously aware of and focusing on diversity? She is not alone. Holly comments that both she and her Indian friends at the school are fascinated by their differences and excited about learning from each other.

It is the physical aspects that she notices initially, comparing the more obvious differences first such as skin and eye colour followed by a more detailed study of individual features. She speaks positively of this scrutiny of physical features and examination of differences. She says there is strong acceptance and mutual admiration that we may interpret as good-natured pre-adolescent schoolgirl interest in each other's appearance. She provides an example of stereotypical attitudes held by some of the Indian girls who associate people with fair skin as being rich. It amuses Holly that she is perceived by some students as being from a rich background because of her skin colour. There is probably more truth to this comment than she realises at the time, as sending a child to an international boarding school in another country is a cost that many families cannot afford. The new school enables Holly to assuage her senses. She has a fascination with clothing and fashion and says she "is blown away" by the different colours, and types of clothing and jewellery of the other girls.

New experiences that the school offers as part of the school curriculum, like yoga and horse riding, help to build her knowledge of other cultures. Until then she has never sat on a horse before. Dance lessons involve not just learning the steps but learning about the "story and legends" that she loves. She feels it allows her to be able to understand and respect the dance moves. Might we view this as another example of her predisposition and openness towards other cultures?

Holly describes the friendships she makes in India as being with girls with whom she "connects", just as in South Korea. She proceeds to provide examples of friendships and positive relationships that she develops with other students and teachers based on common interests such as food, and likes and dislikes. Favourite curries are the basis of a close relationship with a teacher that overcomes language difficulties. Fashion forms the foundation of friendships with other girls at the school, "With relationships and friendships, I don't think the cultural differences really matter that much. It is the things that bond people together", she says. Her cross-cultural experiences appear to lead her to develop a strong belief that relationships are universal regardless of people's differences.

Holly describes cultural practices that greatly surprise her and challenge her notions of appropriate behaviour, citing a "complete reversal" of table manners as one example. She

explains that she has been brought up “to be a lady in Korea”. During certain public celebrations at the school in India, etiquette demands that students do not use cutlery and instead, eat with their hands. Initially she considers this custom to be strange especially when some friends try to feed her with their hands. To reconcile herself she thinks, “Everyone else is doing it and I do not want to feel like an outsider”, reflecting the need for belonging and acceptance that can be issues of great importance for children in cross-cultural situations as well as adolescents (Pollock & van Reken, 2009; Sichel in Bell-Villada, Eidse & Orr, 2001; Wilson, 2016). Once her Indian friends explain to her the underlying philosophy, “that hands are the most beautiful part of our body since they are made of the love of God and are our parents’ creation and therefore we should eat with our hands”, she gains a new appreciation for the practice after her initial critical response. Eventually she adopts the attitude that it is a beautiful way of eating food even though it is completely different from how she has been taught to be “a lady”.

It is in India that Holly’s first change of identity occurs with a name change. Her Indian friends find it difficult to say her Korean name so they change it to a version that is easier for them to pronounce. She does not mind and seems to wholeheartedly accept and embrace her new name since she continues to use it after she leaves India. She promises her friends she will keep the name for the rest of her life so they can find her anywhere in the world thus acknowledging and highlighting her sense of connectedness. Years after Holly leaves India, her friends from India with whom she keeps in contact through Skype and Facebook ask, “Are you still Holly?” She mentions that no one uses her original name anymore in South Korea either, not even her parents who find it perplexing that she does not use the name they gave her.

She says her youngest sister did not even know her “real Korean name” and describes an incident that amuses her—when her sister is quizzed by a friend in South Korea about Holly’s Korean name, her sister insists that Holly is her real name. As her sister retells the story, the conversation causes Holly to stop and think, “Wow, I have really changed”. It remains to be seen whether in the future Holly identifies at all with her Korean name or feels compelled to formally change her name to the one given to her by her friends in India.

As Holly gradually feels herself fitting in to school life in India, she says she begins to have fun and feels more excited rather than worried about the different things she is experiencing.

Does this suggest that she has made a successful transition into the school and her new life in India? How much of this is facilitated by her own attitude and behaviour? Her ability to understand, respect and follow the Indian customs is greatly appreciated by her Indian friends who feel that by following their practices she is not being judgmental about their culture. She says, “They liked me for this”. She expresses discomfort when describing some Thai students at the school who do not accommodate the Indian practices and show disdain for them—displaying her awareness that not all people respect other cultures.

This raises the question of what motivates some of us to be more open to different cultures and practises than others. Is it due to our cultural or family influences? Is it due to perceived negative stereotypes? Is it due to our previous experiences? Holly describes them as “manners just for India”, which suggests she understands and accepts the contextual aspects of culture. She finds adapting her behaviour is the best way to make friends and that is very important to her. She observes that it results in reciprocal behaviour, with her Indian friends becoming more interested in Korean culture. She reflects upon and critically analyses her cross-cultural experiences as she arrives at her own ideas about the best way to facilitate intercultural relationships. Drawing from these experiences Holly believes, “If you want people to accept your culture, you need to step back and understand and see theirs first. It simply does not work to do it your way”. Her advice regarding positive cross-cultural relationships is two-fold, “Accept other people’s differences and try different things. Then other people will open their minds to you as well”.

Colors of the Wind, Vanessa Williams



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbuzskVs6rc&sns=em>

You think you own whatever land you land on
The earth is just a dead thing you can claim
But I know every rock and tree and creature
Has a life, has a spirit, has a name

You think the only people who are people
Are the people who look and think like you
But if you walk the footsteps of a stranger
You'll learn things you never knew you never knew

Have you ever heard the wolf cry to the blue corn moon
Or asked the grinning bobcat why he grinned?
Can you sing with all the voices of the mountain?
Can you paint with all the colors of the wind? ...

And we are all connected to each other,
In a circle, in a hoop that never ends

Have you ever heard the wolf cry to the blue corn moon
Or let the eagle tell you where he's been ...
How high does the sycamore grow?
If you cut it down, then you'll never know

And you'll never hear the wolf cry to the blue corn moon
For whether we are white or copper-skinned
We need to sing with all the voices of the mountain
Need to paint with all the colors of the wind
You can own the earth and still
All you'll own is earth until
You can paint with all the colors of the wind

Colors of the Wind is a song that featured in the 1995 Walt Disney animated movie, *Pocahontas*. The film is a fictional account of the true story of Pocahontas, a native North American woman and an English seaman Captain John Smith who arrived in the new colony of Virginia with British settlers. The film is a musical romance-drama and its significance in this thesis is that it explores a meeting of different cultures.

The song *Colors of the Wind* was written by Stephen Schwartz and Alan Menken and won several music awards including an Academy Award, Golden Globe and Grammy Award. In this video, the song is sung by Vanessa Williams and includes excerpts from the movie that reflect the song's words. I have included this acclaimed song because of its beautiful imagery, poetic lyrics and stirring music, which adds poignancy to the words and correlates with Holly's life story. The title of the song and chorus seem to capture Holly's early fascination with fashion and colors creating an artistic illusion, like that of a kaleidoscope that is the title of this chapter.

The song's focus on respect and harmony with nature and all living creatures encourages us to reflect on our relationships with other people. Holly's narrative suggests that she possesses an openness to other cultures and a willingness to accept difference. The song reminds us of Holly's outlook on life and her view of people, regardless of their appearance, nationality or culture, as she makes concerted efforts to learn about other people and cultures, and in the process, learns new things.

You think the only people who are people
Are the people who look and think like you
But if you walk the footsteps of a stranger
You'll learn things you never knew you never knew

The song is a powerful reminder of our intersubjectivity irrespective of our differences and seems to encapsulate the attitudes Holly develops due to her cross-cultural experiences.

And we are all connected to each other,
In a circle, in a hoop that never ends
For whether we are white or copper-skinned
We need to sing with all the voices of the mountain
Need to paint with all the colors of the wind

A myriad of colours: Looking through a cultural lens

The school in India is situated in the countryside close to a slum where many people live in great poverty. Students at the school have limited contact with the local Indian community and are not permitted to go out alone. They are given general rules for personal safety and instructed not to carry valuable items or eat when in public places as they will attract beggars. Holly speaks with emotion when describing how deeply touched she is by the poor living conditions, the fact that the people do not have enough food, and her feelings at seeing naked children playing in the streets in winter.

She talks about her feelings of guilt and sorrow as she walks along the street with a chocolate bar in her pocket. She explains that if she shares it with one person she will have to share it with everyone and she recognises that there is not enough. “It really broke my heart when I had a chocolate bar in my bag”, she recalls. Holly reaches the conclusion that the school in India is not the best choice for learning English but “great for learning different cultures and seeing things”. Holly’s accounts of events on her return to South Korea suggest that the experience of living in India and absorbing another culture has a noticeable effect upon her and seems to change some of her attitudes and behaviours in a relatively short time.

She observes the differences in her own feelings and views, and her family notices the changes in her. She speaks of having developed a greater appreciation of the quality of her own life as well as a heightened awareness of waste. She recollects that when her sister complains to

her mother about the dinner she has cooked for the family, Holly tells her to stop complaining and to eat it. She then proceeds to describe the poverty she has seen in India and scolds her sister for not wanting to eat food just because she does not like it. Her sister responds, “You have changed. That’s weird”. At first, she is confused by her sister’s comment and denies it, “No. It’s just me, I haven’t changed”, but in time she realises that having seen abject poverty at close hand and the plight of people starving has in fact changed the way she views the world and other people.

The difference in Holly soon becomes apparent to her parents. When choosing restaurants, Holly suggests trying foods from different countries, displaying a willingness to take risks and try new things. They perceive her as being more adventurous, with her father commenting, “Wow! You really like exploring. You never used to be like that”. Describing her parents as being multicultural, she explains that at the time they do not mind the changes they notice in her. Due to health reasons, Holly leaves India after one year and moves to Australia to continue her studies.

Sacrifices and metamorphosis: A teenager’s desire to fit in

It is not until she arrives in Australia that Holly feels she starts to lose her “Korean-ness” although she speaks during our conversation of being “half Indian” when she arrives suggesting that she thinks she has already lost part of her Korean-ness. Is her conclusion that she is half Indian because she feels she had adopted some Indian practices or because she has developed an affiliation with India and Indian people through personal contact? She explains,

I was still Korean but I was also half Indian. It was a really funny time finding who I am. I really didn’t mind though. I wasn’t trying to figure it out. I was just me. I didn’t really think about it.

From the age of 12, Holly lives in a school boarding house in Australia with other girls from predominantly rural Australia and South East Asian countries. She talks about it being a more difficult transition than when she moved to India. There are no other Korean girls at the school

when she starts and she is keen to make friends with Australian girls as well as to improve her English. Holly explains that when she first attends Science classes, she “cannot understand a word” and does not know how to ask for help. This emphasises that the particular discourse of an individual discipline has its own language and vocabulary that can make it difficult for non-native speakers of the language. Holly says it frustrates her that everyone else can understand the language and she is the only one who cannot participate in the discussions. She says, “I expect more of myself here and have to prove it to myself. I am playing a game with myself and I want to win this”.

Responding in a manner that once again seems to reflect great maturity, determination and independence, she thinks to herself, “I can handle this myself”. She displays consideration for others by not wanting to seek help. At the same time, it seems that perhaps she is not being completely open or honest with her parents about her life in Australia so as not to worry them. She surmises that they probably think she is as happy as she was in India. Initially she spends many hours crying alone in her room in the boarding house. We can imagine what a difficult, painful and lonely time it is for her. In what we can possibly view as a remarkable demonstration of determination and resilience rather than a game, Holly decides to alter her cultural identity as the first step of her conscious self-construction of identity. Holly restricts her contact with her parents by limiting conversations with them to once a week for a maximum of 30 minutes stating,

That is when I promise to myself, you have to lose part of you to become “new you” to be able to fit into Australia. I need to give away half of my Korean life. I know I have to sacrifice half of my culture here. Nobody forces me to. That is decided by my choice. I think it is what I need to fit into this community. First, I have to let go. I delete all my Korean songs that my mother has put on my laptop and delete all my Korean friends from my MSN email list. At the time it is a big deal. I know I will be weaker if I speak to my parents and be a baby again and that way be more Korean.

Leading Australian child psychologist Michael Carr-Gregg suggests that the developmental stages of adolescence are a critical time of identity development for young people as, “the fragile sense of self is particularly acute at this stage” (in Wilson, 2016, para. 9). Warren Cann, Psychologist and Chief Executive Officer of the Parenting Centre in Melbourne, Australia agrees saying that during adolescence, “You begin to form a sense of yourself, a sense of identity ...

You also become very conscious of social judgement and comparison, you desperately want to fit in, to be accepted” (para. 18). Holly is not only confronting these adolescent issues but doing so alone in a foreign country with a different culture. Reflecting on our own adolescence may help us to realise just how challenging this must be for her.

Questioning her actions at the time she thinks to herself, “Am I doing the right thing? Maybe it is the best thing that I should forget about learning about other cultures and go back to South Korea, go back to where I belong”, suggesting that Holly still feels a strong sense of belonging and connectedness with South Korea at this stage of her life. It is her keen desire to learn about other cultures that leads to her conclusion that she is doing the right thing. She says she does not feel the need to lose her Korean-ness in India. She believes that she is too young to think about it then and her view of learning other cultures is much stronger when in Australia. Her comment, “The older you get, the more you think”, raises the notion that the transition process may be easier for younger children.

On arrival in Australia, by observing the annoyed expressions on the faces of some of the other students, she senses that not all the other students like her or accept her membership within their environment, Liliana Meneses describes this as the “social jungle of existence” (p. 282 in Kisaka & Osman, 2013). Holly surmises that it is probably because they have difficulty understanding her poor English. She chooses to ignore what other students think about her and decides, possibly for her own social survival, that if she is persistent “and crashes their rooms” someone will like her. This suggests a high degree of self-confidence and bravado on her behalf that we may view as being somewhat in contrast to her conclusion that she needs to alter her identity. Holly puts much time, thought and effort into the transition into her new environment. Being a boarder surrounded daily by many people seems to assist with her eventual transition into her new environment where she makes many supportive friends.

The Special Needs Coordinator at school, who Holly says is very patient with her, seems to provide the greatest support. Taking the advice of the coordinator, she commences writing a daily personal diary in English that allows her to be expressive and honest without worrying about anyone correcting her writing. She learns not to be concerned about mistakes in her writing and believes this helps her language skills and provides an outlet for reflecting upon her

feelings and events. Looking back, Holly feels that when she starts writing, “My mind is still in Korea”, and her diary entries focus on the things she misses from home—her mother, family, friends, and Korean food. All her writings and thoughts appear to remain in Korea and she attributes it to her loneliness and struggle to learn English.

Holly does not mention any school support mechanisms offered to assist with her transition. It is not clear whether this is because the school’s measures to support new students are insufficient or ineffective or due to her outward demeanour of independence and self-reliance. As she develops more friendships, enjoys more classes and engages in more social activities with Australian students she says that her diary “becomes more Australian”. She realises she no longer talks about South Korea as much but her writings are “all about Australia now”. As she gradually develops her English language skills and begins to feel connected with her Australian friends she realises she is developing a sense of belonging to the Australian community.

A pivotal point in the development of her cultural identity appears to be when she is in Year 9. A new student from Korea confronts her with the query, “You are not ‘Korean Korean’ are you? Were you born in Australia?” When Holly responds that she in fact was born in South Korea and had only joined the school a few years earlier, her Korean friend comments,

It does not feel that way. It doesn’t feel like that at all. You feel like you have been living here all your life. For example, your way of thinking is just like your Australian friends, not Korean, your way of socialising with Australian friends.

This is the first time that she hears this and she declares that she is surprised but not offended by this comment. It helps her to become more aware of the Australian influence on her. She suddenly realises, “I am partly Australian”. Is Holly beginning to internalise the deeper aspects of the iceberg of Australian culture without being aware of it? Is the suggestion that Holly is thinking like an Australian because her friend recognises that she has adopted some Australian ways of thinking and being?

Drifting on a multicultural sea

Around this time Holly notices she is starting to have difficulty communicating with her parents resulting in misunderstanding and confusion. Does this mark the beginning of a cultural disconnect from her homeland? She feels that her parents do not understand elements of her life in Australia or the significance of certain Australian occasions such as the Year 12 formal that is a very exciting major event for all the senior students. She recognises that it is difficult for them to understand since they have not experienced the same things. It does not bother her though because she feels that her parents respect and trust her decisions. This may pose more of a problem for her parents than her as they are very surprised and seem to have difficulty accepting their “different daughter who is partly Australian now” with her father asking, “Where is my daughter?”

Visits back home to South Korea highlight the difference between social norms and values held by Holly and her parents. The style of clothing she wears in Australia and different concepts of modesty are an issue at first for her parents. Appearing to adopt a liberal approach, her parents recognise the difference in clothing styles between the two countries and allow her to dress as in Australia although, out of respect, she ensures she always dresses according to Korean standards when visiting her grandparents. Not only is she concerned about offending them, she says that she does not want them to think that they have lost, “Korean Holly, the Korean Holly that they know”. Can we view this as a sign of her own recognition that she is changing? She believes the issue is not so much about different clothing styles and modesty but her grandparents’ perception of her Korean-ness. While accepting these growing differences, Holly feels secure in the knowledge that her family will always be there for her regardless of where she is in the world or how much she changes.

Having left her country of birth at a young age, Holly does not have many close friends left in South Korea and the detachment between her existing friends is reflected in their questions about her attitudes and life in Australia. She feels her “parents and friends will never understand” reflecting a lack of shared understanding after her many unsuccessful efforts to explain to them her life in Australia, and Australian traditions and customs.

While Holly presents a very positive view of her cross-cultural experiences, she also perceives some negative aspects. She acknowledges that having left South Korea at a young age has resulted in incomplete understanding of her cultural background and she expresses sadness that she does not have full knowledge of the country's history. It leads her to feel like she does not fit in and is somewhat of an outsider in her home country. Holly feels like she is missing out when she cannot engage in conversations with her friends about local popular culture like movies and television programs. Holly recognises that in the future, if she returns to work and live in South Korea, and marries someone she describes as “a traditional Korean man”, there may be other negatives that she has not yet identified. Does Holly's uncertainty and openness about where she will live as an adult reflect her international and intercultural orientation? What is her concept of a traditional man? Does she mean a man who has never lived outside of South Korea? Does she perceive it to be a man with a monocultural approach who only follows Korean norms and customs?

A particularly poignant conversation that takes place on one occasion at school provides us with an insight into the quandary Holly feels in relation to her identity. While sitting at school talking to some Australian friends, one of the girls states that she hates all Asians. Once the girl sees the looks on the other girls' faces she realises the inappropriateness of her comment and quickly adds, “Of course, not you Holly. You are different. You are not exactly ‘Asian Asian’ anyway. I am talking about the ‘Asian Asians’”. While we perhaps can glean from this comment that she now is accepted as belonging as an insider by her Australian friends, does it mean she is now an outsider among other Asians?

It is an awkward moment for Holly and she experiences conflicting emotions that she describes as both happy and sad. On one hand, she is pleased that she is so well accepted that her Australian friend no longer notices her Asian features. She is no longer “Asian Asian but half Australian”. It also gives her hope that it is possible to accept differences and become friends with people from different cultures. On the other hand, she is hurt by the comment but her overriding emotion is that of compassion for the girl whom she describes as a “poor girl” because she cannot recognise her own ignorance. Holly can even see some humour in the situation—she is not considered by her friend to be Asian even though she is clearly Asian in her appearance and genetic makeup.

Holly cites other examples of discrimination that are not so overt confessing that, “It is not always what people say but you can sense it by what they don’t do”. She recalls occasions when she is excluded and not invited to parties or outings that she finds hurtful. She reveals that she is non-judgmental by saying she thinks her friends do not realise what they are doing and may be trying to do her a favour because of her difficulty with the language. Her comment, “I can see both sides” reflects Pollock and Van Reken’s view that rationalising the actions of others and suspending judgement is typical of many people who have had a cross-cultural childhood (2009, p. 104).

On another occasion a student informs her, “You must be really good at maths”. When Holly inquires why she thinks that way, the other student replies, “Because you are from South Korea”. Maths, in fact, is Holly’s least favourite subject and while she understands that her friend is trying to be complimentary and it is intended it to be a positive comment, she views it as unintentional discrimination. She rejects the stereotype and regards stereotyping, whether it is positive or negative, as a form of discrimination and unacceptable.

She attributes her ability to deal with cultural differences to a side of her that she calls “Multicultural Holly” reflecting yet another dimension of her self-identification due to her cross-cultural experiences. “Multicultural Holly” she tells us, is not afraid of trying new things and does not avoid people for fear of offending. She seems to have developed a heightened awareness of the importance of social norms and practices through her intercultural sensitivity and self-understanding. She notices that some people avoid interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds yet different visual images, languages and cultures do not bother her. She states, “They are just people to me”. She says she understands that all people have the same fear of being rejected and “create their own boundaries because of their fear”. She feels it is important that all people make an effort to make friends and she often approaches people first to help others overcome their fears.

Lights, Camera, Action: An artist is born

Can we assume from Holly's comments that her experiences not only result in a sense of being multicultural but also broaden her perspectives and depth of understanding about other people and cultures? She speaks of "the hidden beauty of different cultures" as being "very inspirational" and influencing and inspiring her career goals to become an independent filmmaker. Her intention to try to break down discrimination between different races has become a major theme of her movies. It appears Holly has chosen a life path that reflects, and is shaped by, her cross-cultural experiences.

In Year 8 Holly wants to become a fashion designer. Fashion has been her life-long passion and she feels that her cross-cultural experiences allow her to draw designs from around the world. That year she takes part in a Shakespeare Festival at school that she views as having "opened my mind". Her experience of drawing period costumes for the festival leads to her deciding that she only enjoys drawing clothes and not designing them. Soon after, she starts drawing people wearing traditional clothes from different countries. In time, she becomes bored with just drawing so Holly starts adding stories, music and backgrounds to her pictures—she says this results in her wanting to become a filmmaker. She is not certain whether she would have chosen this career path if she had remained in South Korea but believes that it would have taken her much longer to decide what she would like to do if she "had not had the multicultural part of me".

She develops a great passion to help people who have experienced discrimination especially after having endured it personally. She says these experiences not only help her to decide on her career choice but also help to refine her ideas. She tells me that it saddens her to see people socialise exclusively with people from the same cultural background, like when she sees Asian people together in Chinatown. She speaks with great pride at being seen with her German friend Lara, who is her closest friend in Australia and another boarder at the school.

While still at school, Holly starts creating short animated movies based on the theme of discrimination. She enters her creations into film competitions and, to her delight, she enjoys

success in local and interstate competitions. One of her short-animated movies is to be screened on television and her hope is that it will help more people to understand the messages she is trying to convey. This is a view that is shared by leading educational philosopher Maxine Greene who describes the role of imagination and the arts, cited in Kisaka and Osman as,

Human beings are capable of reflection and can view the world critically if they are able to become ‘wide-awake’ and view the world from a variety of perspectives ...

Wide awake philosophy refers to an individual’s ability to overcome hostile reality and make something good out of it. (2013, p. 338-339)

Some of her friends provide the voices for her animated characters and she purposefully reverses some of the roles to give them the opportunity to become “wide-awake” and experience a different perspective. She selects an Australian friend to sing with an Asian accent, and an Asian friend to provide the voice-over for an Indigenous Australian student. Holly intends to make audiences notice different forms of social reality and discrimination through her movies so they might self-reflect and gain greater understanding and empathy. Greene goes on to write in Kisaka and Osman that, “imagination is what, above all, makes empathy possible,” and, “the imagination interacting with works of arts allow people to access multiple perspectives, and even give us a reason to ‘wake up’” (2013, p. 340). Greene tells us awakening the imagination and invoking it to interact with multiple meanings helps people to re-evaluate their consciousness. Holly tries to make this happen by reversing cultural roles in the film. She wants her friends to experience what it feels like to be part of another culture and she then quizzes them about their responses to inform her future filmmaking ideas. Perhaps intuitively she understands what Greene says, “In this way, the work of art can act as a mirror to the self and as a window to the other” (p. 340).

Dreams and conversations: Absorbing other cultures

Learning another language, its nuances and cultural shadings, and becoming literate in that second language is an important aspect of Holly’s cross-cultural and intellectual experience. Holly speaks of her desire to learn English and the efforts she makes to facilitate the process.

She tells me that she is focused on being able to articulate her basic needs and ideas like being able to ask for food when she is hungry.

Holly explains that the prefects at her Indian school encourage students to speak in English. She is told to speak English and not Korean with other Korean students and to limit her conversations with her parents saying, “I am really annoyed with them at the time. I wonder why they care and that they do not understand my issues of trying to fit in and speak English all the time”. She feels that she is bullied by the prefects, who are older Indian girls and speak perfect English. She muses to herself that they are trying to teach her a lesson but, on reflection after she leaves India, she decides that they are being supportive and only trying to help her learn the language.

Once she arrives in Australia Holly wants to be able to communicate in English at a higher level that will allow her to have friends with whom she can discuss problems and issues. She feels she needs “to absorb English” and is even more keen to improve her English skills. She talks about her “beautiful English teachers” in Australia who teach her the formalities of the English language and she perceptively realises they try to make her feel comfortable in class by repeating information and instructions so she does not have to ask.

Holly views the need for mastering English language for informal interactions with friends in a different light saying, “Learning English at school does not help you to communicate with friends. You have to learn for yourself”. She believes this is best achieved in the schoolyard during break times and in the boarding house where she lives. In her opinion, schools need to foster opportunities for informal social interactions among students, since learning a language and learning a culture are inextricably linked and “learning about culture is everything”.

An interesting development Holly notices regarding her English acquisition is that, “I dream in English now as well”. She says she is fascinated the first time it happens and wakes up thinking, “This is really odd. I am Australian”. Then she notices she starts thinking in English in Science class, where she could not understand a word when she first joined the school. It is in

South Korea that she receives her greatest shock, when she realises one day that she is translating Korean to English.

When my mum was speaking to me I was translating it back to English. That was something that completely freaked me out. I thought what is going on? I did not really mind though. It did not cause any problems with my communicating.

Holly's immersion in the English language appears to be mirrored in her thoughts and language processes to the extent that we may view English as overtaking Korean as her dominant language. She seems to be achieving her goal of internalising the process of learning English. While she is not bothered by the realisation that she is now thinking in English, she considers literature an important part of culture and believes it is important to maintain her first language.

Holly does not want to lose her connection and identity as a member of the Korean community and sees language as a necessary tool. "Not forgetting how to read and write my own language is the most important thing as a Korean", and it motivates her subject choices. She says to ensure that she maintains her Korean language she chooses to study Korean A as part of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. Is her decision to undertake the IB curriculum, an internationally recognised qualification, a reflection of her intercultural orientation as well as her willingness to challenge herself, as the curriculum

aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect[?]
... These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right. (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2016)

Holly says "it is risky" undertaking Korean language studies and she finds it difficult because she has not studied Korean literature before but believes it is important to learn the language while still at school. As Holly changes her cultural identity, it appears that it is vitally important to her to retain her mother tongue language with which she seems to strongly identify her Korean-ness. Is Holly trying to avoid something like the loss experienced by novelist, Nancy Huston, who moves from Canada to France and who feels strongly that by moving to another

country and writing in French that, “*J’ai trahi mon pays, et je l’ai perdu*,” “I’ve betrayed my country, and I’ve lost it” (in Averis, 2008, p. 4)?

Nuances of words in different languages are becoming apparent to Holly with her comment, “I just read a great novel written in Korean that I was able to read in Korean without changing the original meaning behind it”. She seems to be becoming aware that translation can affect the interpretation and meaning of a text. Meneses in Kisaka and Osman writes about language affecting meaning, “Only in Portuguese could I tell you my stories with any hope to convey their inherent meanings; only in Portuguese. It is a language of the heart” (2013, p. 279). Meneses also explains that languages are more than just languages. “They’re also worldviews - and therefore, to some extent, untranslatable” (p. 279). Davis views language as being inextricably linked with culture when he writes that it

is not merely a set of grammatical rules or a vocabulary. It is a flash of the human spirit, the vehicle by which the soul of each particular culture comes into the material world. Every language is an old-growth forest of the mind, a watershed of thought, an ecosystem of spiritual possibilities. (2009, p. 3)

Holly’s ultimate desire is to keep her cultural traditions and maintain her Korean culture. “Sometimes I think I am losing part of me, which is scary”. At the same time, she says, “I have no problem losing part of myself for my great pleasure as I am absorbing other cultures”. It appears she believes some loss of identity is necessary to “absorb other cultures”. Holly says it is her parents who are concerned that she does not know about important historical Korean events because she is not living in South Korea. They fear that this could be a problem for her on her return as she will not be able to engage fully in conversations with others.

On the other hand, Holly talks about how she has experienced and adopted new cultural traditions while living in Australia. She says Christmas was celebrated in South Korea only with friends but now she involves the whole family saying, “It happens in my house because of me basically”, indicating the effect of Holly’s cultural experiences on her family as well as herself. Poignantly she adds, “A part of me is telling me it is important to maintain my culture”. She keeps a Korean calendar in Australia but does not celebrate Korean events except her birthday as many of the common celebrations like Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day are held at different times

in the two countries. Seeming to display a willingness to adapt cultural traditions when in Australia, Holly celebrates Australian Mothers' Day and thanks the significant adults in her life in Australia for their support, such as the boarding house mistresses.

Holly values her cross-cultural experiences as "as a gift" that provides her with many benefits. As she reflects upon her experiences, she feels that they helped her to learn new things and "make great friends regardless of where they are from or what kind of traditional values they have". She appears to have gained greater self-confidence and speaks of feeling comfortable about approaching new people and making friends with no concern saying, "I can make friends easily now. I feel very strongly that language should not be a barrier or a different culture should not be a boundary for you to get closer to someone".

Holly perceives the greatest part of living in India and Australia is that it enabled her to absorb different cultures. "I don't think that without absorbing and losing parts of me, I could have made such great friendships. It was well worth it." Holly believes that she needed to give up some of herself and that it is, "Too difficult to be both Korean and Australian at the same time and sometimes too hard to combine Korean, Australian and Indian together". She elaborates on this by saying if she ever regains what she has lost of herself, she will need to lose a part of her Australian self, which she would regard as a significant loss.

Holiday house or home? Disconnection with the past

At the end of her schooling Holly plans to return to South Korea to undertake a gap year before embarking on tertiary studies. In the past, visits home are for periods of a few weeks at a time and the short holidays back to South Korea pose no problems. She says she does not even think about fitting in at those times and is just excited about going home and focusing "on being me and having fun". We might speculate about what characteristics or behaviours Holly displays or refers to when she is "being me" in South Korea given the effect of her cross-cultural experiences. Are they a combination of traits of Korean, Indian and Australian ways of thinking and being that she has developed while living in each country or does she revert to "Korean Holly"? Is she able to separate the different elements of the person she has now become?

Holly feels “odd” when she first notices that she views “holiday equals South Korea”. She seems to have become a visitor in her own homeland. She is in Year 10 when this thought occurs to her as she is unpacking her bags on her return to the boarding house after a holiday in South Korea. She notices that she feels relieved to be back and could “now get back on track” as it is the place that she says she feels most comfortable or at home. Holly discloses that,

In Korea, home does not really feel like home anymore. We also moved home so many times. The house is new to me and all the things in the house are new to me. I am not part of that history. I do feel welcome and I am happy to spend time with my family and friends but I still cannot get rid of the feeling that I am on holidays which feels odd. I am so Australian now.

There seems little left of Holly’s attachment to her physical home. In essays appearing in *Writing out of Limbo* by Gene Bell-Villada, Nina Sichel Eidse with Faith and Elaine Orr, John Liang describes this feeling of not belonging as “out-of-placedness” and goes on to describe it as “not exactly a welcome feeling” (2001, p. 81). Elizabeth Liang echoes him writing, “One of the hardest parts of TCK life is that no place feels like home the way other people seem to mean it” (p. 452).

Holly says that she can no longer engage fully in conversations with her family and friends about events in South Korea. Returning to live in South Korea for a gap year is a source of great anxiety for her saying, “I don’t want to make a fool of myself”. It will be the first time in seven years that she will be returning to live there for an extended period. This is somewhat of an unusual circumstance as travel associated with a young person’s gap year usually involves moving from away from home rather than returning to home, which makes Holly’s planned gap year somewhat unique. Holly appears to adopt the view that things will be different when she returns to South Korea. She finds herself once again struggling with her identity, concerned that she will need to be “Korean Korean”. She has decided that she will have to consciously think about and consider what she says and how she behaves. She expresses her concerns as being two-fold. She is concerned about whether she will be accepted and how she will feel living there. She also does not want to judge or inadvertently hurt people by her actions. These fears seem to highlight Holly’s perception that she is no longer fully South Korean. Might we view this as another example of an unconscious awareness and internalisation of both the surface and deep elements of the cultural iceberg?

Holly has only known and lived in South Korea as a young girl who, with the seemingly egocentric focus of a child—as proposed by Jean Piaget, the famed Swiss psychologist and discussed by Richard Kohler in his book *Jean Piaget* (2014, p. 77)—thinks South Korea is the biggest and best country in the world. Holly maintains the view that she would have missed out on learning about other cultures if she had remained in South Korea and speaks of, “seeing beautiful things” and “the beauty of it. There is something wonderful out there. People are just not ready to accept it”. If she had been stubborn and not changed, she says, she would not have made new friends or learned English and so, by accepting other cultures, she perceives she has gained much yet she is aware that people’s experiences are different and they respond to cross-cultural differences in a variety of ways.

The game is over: The self reconciled

In Year 12 Holly is thrilled to be elected to the leadership role of Vice Captain of the boarding house. As a member of the Student Leadership Council she is responsible for representing all the boarders at the school, not just the international students. She thinks,

This is the moment when I prove it to myself. It doesn’t matter what country you are from or what language you speak. This is about interacting with people. Nothing else matters. Language cannot be a boundary.

We might view this as Holly having won the game she played with herself when she first arrived in Australia when she says, “I expect more of myself here and have to prove it to myself. I am playing a game with myself and I want to win this”.

Holly is most heartened in her new role by the fact that both international and Australian boarders seek her advice and support. Being elected as a school leader provides Holly with a sense of pride—she feels respected now, not just welcomed or accepted saying, “I never feel better than when I am helping students from all other backgrounds. It is so good to feel needed”. She happily puts aside her own homework to help other students. She feels, “That they just see me as Holly, not Korean Holly. It means a lot when they ask for my help just because of

who I am". With these words Holly seems to display an appreciation of being recognised and valued for being herself and not for her cultural background.

The ultimate highlight for Holly is when she reads the school's International Club Charter at the Year 12 Graduation Ceremony in front of all the other graduates, teachers and parents. She states, "It is a glorious moment for me. It means a lot to me and I hope it means a lot to the international students". The personal pride and joy she feels might be because the words of the Charter articulate her innermost views about people and cultures, particularly since she has been instrumental in creating the Charter. She hopes the reading has an impact on the adults in the audience as well as the students, reflecting her belief that it is not just young people who sometimes show a lack of respect and do not value cultural diversity. At her last meeting of the International Club before her graduation, she is made an Honorary Life Member. She is awarded this honour because of her commitment to the values and ideals of internationalism and interculturalism, and for displaying all the qualities that embody global citizenship including integrity, respect for all people regardless of their cultural background, awareness of global issues, fluency in more than one language, and a disposition to help others (Council of International Schools, 2013).

As Holly reflects on her life experiences during our conversations, she speaks interchangeably about the various dimensions of her being suggesting a fragmented view of her cultural identity. At various times in her life journey she sees herself as "Korean Holly", "Indian Holly", "Australian Holly" and "Multicultural Holly" and speaks of being "Korean Korean" and "half Australian". We might ask does she fit the concept of the marginal man that Robert Park described as long ago as 1928 as someone "who lives in two worlds, in both of which he is a stranger" (1928, p. 893)? Or can we consider Holly contradicting this statement by being someone who is comfortable living in different worlds? Holly's journey appears to be a conscious journey of self-identification, self-construction, self-reflection, self-discovery and self-development involving considerable time, thought, effort, and energy.

By the end of her schooling, Holly appears to have resolved her identity saying, "I am just Holly now". A sense of calm and peace emanates from Holly as she utters these words suggesting that "just Holly" has reconciled and is comfortable with who she is and with her

sense of identity. Yet it appears that elements of the different cultures may remain within her forever when she declares, “I still am very Indian in some ways. When I see a temple I still have to stop for a few minutes. It is like a habit from the Indian experience”.

Holly speaks of her hopes and aspirations for her future children. Perhaps not surprisingly, she says that she would like them to experience different cultures but she “will not force them” but allow them to decide for themselves. It is the same attitude her parents adopted with her. Her two younger sisters chose not to study abroad. Does this reflect Holly’s greater openness, willingness and courage to take risks than her younger siblings? Is this due to her personality or being the first child and potentially more influenced by her father’s openness to other cultures? Or is it perhaps due to her parents being less enthusiastic about their other children studying abroad having seen the changes in her and experiencing the loss of “Korean Holly”?

While acknowledging and accepting that her future children may not be as interested in other cultures as herself, Holly states she is determined to educate her children to respect people from different backgrounds to ensure they do not engage in discrimination, either intentionally or unintentionally. As Holly contemplates the future, she feels that she probably will not choose to live in South Korea as an adult because she believes there are greater opportunities in other countries but she would like her children to be aware of South Korea, to visit her family regularly and to learn to speak Korean.

As we reflect on Holly’s narrative, it appears that her cross-cultural experiences have a profound effect on her identity, personal development, values, life choices and outlook on life that also have an effect on her family and her relationships with other people. While displaying an interest in other cultures from an early age, Holly seems to gain a greater appreciation of cultural diversity and increases her cross-cultural knowledge and skills through her lived experiences, which she feels enrich her life. While initially attracted by the differences between cultures, after living in different cultural environments, Holly gains an appreciation that it is the commonalities between people and universal values that bind us together.

Holly maintains that not everyone responds to cultural differences in the same way and even people with inherently good motives sometimes engage in unintentional discrimination. After, at times, a painful journey of self-reflection, self-identification and conscious self-construction, Holly appears to have arrived at a stage where she is comfortable with herself as “just Holly”. She values the opportunities she has had to experience and “absorb” other cultures and we perhaps can conclude from her comments that she is likely to maintain a continued cross-cultural orientation because of her attitude to her experiences.

Chapter 6 - THE SCOTTISH HEART STILL BURNING: MÀIRIE

Màirie has just celebrated her 70th birthday when I meet her through a mutual friend. She is born in Scotland and emigrates to Launceston, Australia with her family when she is a young schoolgirl. She lives in the state of Tasmania, an island in the southernmost part of Australia. It is the place to which Màirie's family emigrated over 50 years ago and where she has resided most of her life. Our friend introduces us because she knows that Màirie and I both have experienced a cross-cultural childhood. Having heard us often describe our experiences she thinks we will have much in common and can relate to each other's stories in a way that she is not able to do since she has not experienced a cross-cultural childhood. She is right. There is an immediate connection when we meet.

Since then, whenever I visit Tasmania, we get together and reminisce about our respective cross-cultural experiences and discuss the effect on our lives. Màirie works as an educational consultant and so the field of education provides more common ground for us to explore. During one of our conversations I mention that I am embarking on research about people's lived experiences of a cross-cultural childhood and Màirie volunteers to contribute her story. Our conversations develop into rich questioning and self-questioning, which lead to our sharing understandings that we have not yet come to before.

"It's my party, and I'll cry if I want to ... You would cry too if it happened to you" (Gore, 1962/1963). Birthday parties generally are happy occasions, especially when they are to celebrate a special milestone like reaching a new decade. Like the lyrics of the 1960s song *It's My Party* made popular by Lesley Gore, certain life experiences can affect how people respond to this event. Màirie's 70th birthday is celebrated joyfully by her family and friends, some of whom have

travelled the great distance from Scotland, Màirie's birthplace, to be with her on this special occasion. This is a source of great happiness for her but it also creates mixed emotions and raises questions that continue to grow the longer her Scottish cousins remain in Australia. Long conversations re-living shared experiences as children in Scotland, stories about family members and life back in Scotland cause Màirie to reflect upon her separation from her relatives and her country of birth, the effect of her family moving to Australia, and how her life might have turned out had she remained in Scotland.

Running free beside the sea: Childhood memories

As a child Màirie lives in the fishing village of Port Seton in Scotland, ten miles east of Edinburgh where her father who is a fisherman was born. Her mother was born and raised in Edinburgh where Màirie's father goes to buy provisions for his trawling boat. It is on one of his shopping trips there that he meets a local businessman who is a wine merchant, grocer and manager of a store. The wine merchant has a young daughter who eventually becomes Màirie's mother. There is an immediate attraction and the couple quickly develop a relationship. After a long courtship, they marry in 1938 and settle into the husband's home in Port Seton. It is the beginning of a lifelong love affair that spans two continents and several decades.

Although the geographical distance is not great, only about 12 miles, the communities of Port Seton and Edinburgh are vastly different. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland and one of the largest cities in the United Kingdom, renowned as a centre of education and the arts. It is a cosmopolitan city compared with the small coastal village of Port Seton where life is much simpler and everyone knows everyone else. The young bride is required to deal with not only leaving her family and the only home that she has ever known, but to settle into a close-knit community comprising a few thousand people.

Màirie's mother comes from a very different background than that of her new family. She has difficulty settling in and is never properly accepted, particularly by some of her husband's sisters. She is more educated than her sisters-in-law who do not value and are not particularly interested

in education, content with being fisherwomen like their mother. In addition to being an outsider from Edinburgh, she is religious and disapproves of drinking alcohol unlike her relatives—this increases the divide between them. It is her manner of speaking though that sets her apart the most as soon as local people meet her.

Since she comes from Edinburgh she speaks “pure English” or the “King’s English” that is distinctly different from the local dialect in Port Seton and she often does not understand what people are saying. Màirie senses a difference between her mother and the local people as she is growing up, although some of her mother’s friends have a similar background. The Edinburgh family work in commerce and have a small bakery business. Màirie’s mother leaves school early because her mother dies when she is 16 years of age but the premature end to her schooling does not prevent her from becoming cultured and well spoken.

Màirie is the youngest of three children and has two brothers who are six and eight years older than her. She has her own unique identity in the village because her father is popular and well liked. He is the first son in a family of ten children and very much loved. His sisters absolutely adore him. His eldest sister and another sister with the same name as Màirie are particularly close to him. Every fisherman in Port Seton has a nickname and he is affectionately known as “Patsy Doll”, in the local custom of creating monikers based on the sound of a person’s proper name. Her father is often away all week fishing and on the weekends Màirie joins him on the dock to help him with the nets, enjoying the companionship as her brothers are not interested.

In this way the people of the village get to know Màirie and she becomes known as “Patsy Doll’s daughter”. Her moniker is perceived as a term of endearment and we might view it as reflecting her acceptance and position within the community. She is warmly welcomed throughout the village and people know who she is wherever she goes. People in shops often ask her whether she is related to her grandmother who is well known because she is a very successful fishing businesswoman and a strong Baptist with ten children. It is another sign of her connectedness and belonging in the community when people say, “You must be her granddaughter because you are the spitting image of her”.

As Màirìe is growing up she is aware of her mother's differences as a newcomer in the local community, although she herself has a strong sense of belonging and is happy living there. She does not feel any different from other people in the village except ironically a few of her cousins because of some of the family's reservations about her mother. Màirìe speaks fondly of her uncle John who becomes part of the family and community folklore. He is the sixth child in her father's family and weighs a tiny 11 ounces when he is born. The family yarn is that when he is born his mother places him in cotton wool in the bottom drawer of a chest of drawers near a fire to keep him away from the draft. She looks after him so well that he grows up to be a strapping big man. Unfortunately, later in life he is considered to have made "a bad marriage" and his unhappiness leads him to becoming an alcoholic although he continues to help run the business with his mother. He is known for his impeccable style and is always beautifully dressed in a shirt, tie and overcoat.

In her wanderings around the village Màirìe often comes across her uncle and invariably he is affected by alcohol "but not blindly drunk". He is always kind to her and gives her sixpence for a treat, an indulgence that seems a great deal of money to her. It endears him to Màirìe but there are a range of community responses to the uncle that she lives with as a child. Some people are very negative while others who are less judgmental and more accepting say, "That's just John". As a child Màirìe picks up on the biases and prejudices in the community. The story is not just part of family lore but becomes community lore as people interpret what they know about the family and put it into the context of their own range of understanding.

Education is valued by Màirìe's family although there is not much enrichment from home because both parents work and there are few books at the school that she attends. Màirìe "loves and adores school", where she excels and often comes top of the class. One brother goes to university but leaves without completing his studies because he is required to help the family. Màirìe has an active childhood and is involved in community activities such as the local Brownies and Girl Guides. She enjoys much freedom as a child within a perceived safe environment. In summer, she does not have to report home until 10pm because it is still light in Scotland well into the evening hours. In winter, she plays with friends under the street lights. She recalls a happy childhood where she loves running freely on the rocks and playing in the streets.

Màirie and her brothers speak the “King’s English” in their mother’s presence and Màirie is expected to do the same at school but she finds she cannot get along with other children in the village if she cannot speak their dialect. Màirie effectively speaks two “languages”—one that she uses at home and one that she speaks with her friends at school and the other villagers. On her way to and from school and at breaks while playing with the other children, Màirie uses the local dialect that the other children use to communicate with one another. She is forbidden to speak the dialect in front of her mother who says, “That’s a horrible word. It is not nice”, yet language is not an issue with her father who, having grown up in Port Seton, speaks the local dialect. She cannot remember him ever correcting her speech. Does Màirie ever wonder why the dialect is not “nice” in her mother’s eyes? We might wonder if she has a preference for either “language”.

She is in a quandary because she wants to do as her mother tells her but if she speaks the “King’s English” she feels she will be perceived by the other children as being different, and being accepted by them is very important to her. Even though they are both nominally English, the “languages” appear nothing alike to her. The words are different. They are very different in intonation. Pronunciation is different. Word endings are not expressed as clearly in the dialect. Some words are so different that she is “horrified” by the difference. Màirie feels that she probably uses a mixture of languages when she is growing up in Port Seton—as often is the case with children living in a multilingual environment. My siblings and I often blend Polish words and phrases when speaking to each other in English. For example, “Pass me the *masto*, butter, please”.

This is Màirie’s first experience of being perceived as different. She is only about 4 or 5 years of age when she becomes aware of different nuances. A few years later she starts registering different accents. She never thinks about it that way before our conversation but, as she recalls her use of language as a child, she says that it probably facilitated her ability “to sink into somebody else’s dialect” relatively easily during her life. She cites the example of when she is with her Edinburgh cousins she speaks “properly” but when she is with her Port Seton cousins her language is “as rough and raw as theirs”. One year after spending the holidays with friends at Berwick-Upon-Tweed she returns with a sing-song dialect that characterises the region. She is very conscious of the change in dialect and adapting to it because of her desire to belong and be accepted. She feels that her early training in identifying different accents helps her settle into Australia.

Màirie displays an interest in language from an early age and recalls that the family, mainly her relatives from Edinburgh, would get together for Sunday dinners and after dinner they would play “Party Pieces”. One of the cousins takes elocution lessons and Màirie is totally enthralled as she sits and listens to her cousin reciting the Canterbury Tales in her crisp clear English. Other cousins who have spent time in various parts of the United Kingdom have different twangs and she appears to associate the accents with social status as well as regional location.

The first separation: Left behind

Màirie’s father is a very capable and successful fisherman, and part owner of a fishing boat in Port Seton. He also is Captain of a ship in India during World War II. His reputation is well known and he receives an offer to become Captain of a cargo vessel in Launceston for a Tasmanian trading company because there is no-one in Australia with the necessary qualifications. The fishing industry in Scotland is very volatile—sometimes he earns a great deal of money and at other times he makes next to nothing, so he accepts the position and flies to Australia.

Màirie’s father leaves Scotland just after her 11th birthday. She says that she does not know about his departure until he is leaving. She guesses that she probably is informed about it beforehand but does not fully appreciate his leaving her until the whole family is at the train station and she sees him board the train. After they return home from the station with one of her uncles her mother throws herself onto the bed “howling”. Màirie’s instinct is to go upstairs and console her but she is told to leave her mother to deal with her loss alone. This episode seems to mark the point of separation between mother and daughter. Her mother effectively absents herself from Màirie’s life, who for the main part ends up looking after herself. The wrench is also heartbreaking for Màirie given her closeness with her father, yet she does not feel the true effect of his leaving until she has not seen him for a few weeks.

While she misses her father greatly, life continues in Port Seton after her father’s departure but life changes for Màirie with school becoming the centre of her life. That year she is voted

Gala Queen, the most popular girl at school, which surprises her as she does not consider herself to be particularly popular with the other girls. It is a special event in the life of the school and the small village and it is an exciting time for her. It is a great honour and means much to her as her brother's girlfriend previously had been selected as Gala Queen. Not all Mairie's school experiences are positive though. There are times when she finds school "pretty horrible" because she is treated with violence by teachers and students, and feels inhibited. She has a favourite teacher whom she credits with being instrumental in creating the person she becomes and Mairie lets her know it when she visits her many years later. She speaks of other teachers' mood changes and how if Mairie did not do what was expected she would "get the strap" in the days when corporal punishment was permitted in schools.

She recounts one day when the class is told to memorise a poem that the teacher has written on the board. The teacher leaves the room and the class turns into "a riot". When the teacher returns she is extremely angry and Mairie is so frightened that she cannot remember the words of the poem. The teacher lines up all the students in a horseshoe shape at the front of the room. She hits every child on the hand with a three-pronged leather strap. Mairie imagines there are people sitting in the empty desks watching her humiliation although in reality no-one is there.

Another example that she provides of the tough school environment is when her friend whom she views as "a rebel" forgets to return a book to school. The teacher warns the girl that if she does not bring the book back the next day "she will hit her bottom". The girl does not do as she is instructed so the teacher lifts her friend's skirt "revealing her pink knickers to the class". She proceeds to threaten to spank the girl's bare bottom if she does not return the book, which she defiantly does not do. The next day, just as the teacher is about to hit her, the girl's mother enters the classroom. Mairie thinks to herself, "Someone is coming to rescue us". She holds a very clear memory of the girl being dragged out of the classroom by her mother to protect her from the teacher.

These events frighten Mairie and result in her becoming very wary for a long time of people in authority, the power they hold over others, and the possible dire consequences of going against authoritative figures. Church authority and the "fire and brimstone" teachings taught by the redheaded minister at Sunday School are feared by Mairie. She deems that she learns to read

by reading the Bible at Sunday School. She can recite some of her favourite stories including “Samson and Delilah” and “David and Goliath”. Is she unconsciously drawn to these stories because they reflect her own power struggles and epitomise the struggle between strength and weakness, and power and subordination that she seems to be experiencing?

At the end of primary school Màirie sits the 11+ examination, which is a prerequisite for entry into high school. The examination is used in Scotland to stream students into different school levels. Màirie achieves an ‘A’ and is placed in the French and Latin class that she absolutely loves. There are some subjects including English that she finds difficult since she cannot relate them to her own experiences. She does not have a reading background and is not familiar with the poets and geography because she has not travelled further than Edinburgh. It all seems very strange to her.

Her father is still away and her mother remains bereft because of his absence. She accepts a night nursing job so Màirie is left almost entirely alone. One brother is at university and the other is an apprentice, and both brothers have girlfriends so they have little time for their younger sister. By now she has reached adolescence and becomes interested in boys. She attends high school in Scotland for one year where she has a good friend whom she considers to be different from the other girls because of her friendliness, warmth and sincerity. At this time, as Màirie is experiencing the physical, emotional and social challenges that adolescence brings, she starts to develop self-doubts and wonders whether she will be as successful in secondary school as she has been in primary school. This seems to be of great importance to her. She begins to develop a different attitude to her studies, although she dreams of becoming a teacher, as girls tend not to go to university. She is keen to be part of the teenage village gang but this is not to be because as the school year comes to an end in June, events change the course of Màirie’s life forever.

The second separation: Leaving others behind

Originally, her father plans to be away for six months but he earns a good steady income that he would not be able to receive if he remained in Scotland. He sends money back home that helps to pay for Màirie's brother's university education. He regards Australia as a new country where he can do well—and he falls in love with it. He is one of many Scottish people who emigrate to Australia in the 20th Century in search of a better life and greater opportunities after the recession and deprivations of World War II that had an adverse impact on Scotland's economy. For Màirie, his leaving is a life-altering event. She describes it as a “terrible separation and the most horrendous time” of her whole life.

In the letters that he sends back home, her father describes life in Australia and after about six months her parents decide that the whole family will follow him there. Màirie believes that largely it is her mother's longing for her father that brings the family to Australia because they remain very much in love. There are family discussions about emigrating but Màirie, possibly because of her age, is not involved in them. She cannot remember being asked if she wants to go, which seems to contribute to her sense of powerlessness when it is time to leave. Had she been asked how she felt about it she states that she would have replied that she wants to see her father but does not want to go to Australia.

In June 1960 the family's immigration papers arrive and Màirie is told that the family will be leaving in just three weeks. We might imagine that this news comes as quite a shock for the young girl. They plan to leave from Tilbury where they are to board a large boat and travel by sea for six weeks. The thought is “heart crunching” as she relives the memory and Màirie becomes very emotional as she describes her feelings. She remembers standing up and swinging her arms about when she is told the news. She tells me she feels totally perplexed at the thought of leaving. She locks herself in the bathroom saying she is never going to come out. If she is in a room when the subject comes up she runs out of the room yelling, “I'm not going! I'm not going!” but inevitably she is a compliant child and ends up doing as she is told. We might consider her strong reaction as understandable given that she is in the middle of the vulnerable time of adolescence and enjoys a rich and happy childhood filled with family, friends and a familiar environment where she feels she belongs and is accepted, and has established her own

identity. The only reason Màirie finally agrees to move to Australia is because her beloved father is there even though her mother later reminds her that, “we had to drag you kicking and screaming”.

Her anxiety and fears are apparent when she says she is frightened by the thought of the family having to live on Flinders Island in Bass Strait and of her being sent to a boarding school in Launceston. She does not want to leave her home, her family and Port Seton but basically has no choice. She does not want to leave her friends, and school, and the security of how her life is developing. It is something that Màirie continues to ponder for the rest of her life. What would she have been like if she had stayed? What would she have become? As Màirie tells me of the anguish that she feels as she describes her emotions she says, “I feel it in my chest right now. It feels like my heart is torn. Maybe this feeling is why I have chest pains”.

One of her brothers marries while her father is away and has a child so the family members who emigrate are her mother, brother, sister-in-law and 6-month-old niece who is Màirie’s goddaughter. She is very close to her niece whom she credits as the one who “saves her” as she settles into her new surroundings because she loves babies and this is someone that she does not have to leave behind in Scotland. Her grandfather plans to emigrate with the family but he dies before they leave. Might we view this as another shock that heightens the feelings of loss and sadness at this emotionally charged time?

The pain of separation

Once the immigration approval comes through the family is busy preparing for the departure. Màirie stops attending school before the end of the school year so she can get ready to leave. It is the end of the first term of her second year in high school and she is very unhappy because of her imminent departure and her loneliness is compounded by not being able to see her friends at school each day. The family live in a rented Council house so they do not have to sell the house, which is one less anxiety for them.

They can take only a limited amount of baggage on the trip so they face the difficult task of deciding what items to take with them and what to leave behind, eventually packing their belongings into just three trunks. In the process of reducing their belongings, her mother decides some of their possessions must be given away permanently or given to people to look after while they are away and so their furniture is shared amongst her aunts. Màirie believes that this is an indication that her mother thinks they will eventually return to Scotland.

The family does not own many books but Màirie has gathered quite a small collection because she often wins prizes at school and Sunday School and these are her prized possessions. These must remain in Scotland. She remembers shedding tears as she pedals along the street on the bicycle her aunt has given her to deliver her books to the primary school library. It takes a couple of trips. This seems to have been a very traumatic experience for her and the memory continues to evoke sadness and bring tears to her eyes when she recollects these events. She tells me that the school is still there but it has been rebuilt and Màirie often wonders if her books remain within. She asks herself whether she should go back and try to retrieve them. Might this suggest that she never gets over the loss and still longs for her books? Another great loss is “the most beautiful desk” that her brothers built and French polished for her. She describes it as the most prized possession of her life. She never finds out what happens to the desk, whether her mother gives it away or discards it. She also does not know what happens to the doll’s house that her mother has especially made for Màirie. It looks different from any other girl’s doll’s house that she has ever seen and is a source of joyful surprise when she receives it.

When the time finally arrives to leave Port Seton, the family travel with their relatives on a bus to the train station. At the time, perhaps the most difficult thing for Màirie to leave behind is her boyfriend. Like most of the other teenagers in the village she has a boyfriend by this time with whom she shares her first kiss. He gives her a friendship ring that symbolises their close relationship. Màirie describes the pain as “very harsh” when he comes to say goodbye at the station and they exchange passionate kisses as they part. “It was terrible. There is devastation on leaving that station on the train”, she remarks. The brother who chooses not to accompany the family to Australia, his girlfriend and one of the aunts travel to London with them to see them off from the country. At that point, they are still together, surrounded by family members. We can imagine that this affords them some comfort and cushions them from the reality of the parting. It is while Màirie is on the train journey travelling each minute further and further away

from Port Seton that she realises “the hype is finished” and what she has been dreading is now a reality.

She is in the carriage. A great sense of emptiness pervades her. Everything is gone. She does not know what will happen next, she has no idea where London is and does not know anything about it. She is just a simple village girl. It is night time and everything is dark outside. There is a dull light inside the carriage and everyone is crying, including her mother. Mairie feels very confused and is crying too. “As I hear the clickety-clack of the wheels of the train everybody quietens down and the loneliness is extreme”, she reminisces. It is a loneliness that seems never to leave her as we see her life story unfold. The train journey is the first part of Mairie’s trip and what we might view as the beginning of her disconnection from her country of birth. Hoffman describes a similar experience as she journeys by train to Vancouver after the ship journey from Poland to Canada when her family emigrated in 1959, “From now on, my life will be divided into two parts, with the line drawn by that train” (1989, p. 100).

The intensity of the experience leads Mairie to reflect upon the pain of Jewish families as they are torn away by force from their homelands during World War II. She draws comparisons with her feelings without experiencing the same level of fear and uncertainty caused by the presence of armed soldiers keeping guard. It seems to reflect her empathy and compassion for others through her own enduring pain of separation. They are very different circumstances yet Mairie, like the Jewish hostages, does not know where she is going or what is going to happen to her. “It is a powerful moment of separation,” she exclaims.

Mull of Kintyre, Paul McCartney and Wings



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EH7I-WV0LZA&sns=em>

Mull of Kintyre, oh mist rolling in from the sea
My desire is always to be here
Oh Mull of Kintyre
Far have I traveled and much have I seen
Darkest of mountains with valleys of green
Past painted deserts the sun sets on fire
As he carries me home to the Mull of Kintyre ...

Sweep through the heather like deer in the glen
Carry me back to the days I knew then
Nights when we sang like a heavenly choir
Of the life and the times of the Mull of Kintyre ...

Smiles in the sunshine and tears in the rain
Still take me back where my memories remain
Flickering embers go higher and higher
As they carry me back to the Mull of Kintyre ...

Mull of Kintyre, oh mist rolling in from the sea
My desire is always to be here
Oh Mull of Kintyre

The lyrics, music and images of the song *Mull of Kintyre* evoke a deep sense of longing and nostalgia that are reminiscent of Màirìe's profound feelings and longing for Scotland, the Scottish people, and the strong sense of community and belonging that she enjoyed there. It is a feeling shared by Paul McCartney who co-wrote the song in 1977 with Denny Laine, a fellow member of the band, Wings. The Mull of Kintyre is a historic area considered to be the ancient cradle of Scotland (Welcome to the Mull of Kintyre, 2017).

McCartney was born in Liverpool, England. He and his late wife Linda McCartney, a New York photographer, fell in love with the rugged and picturesque coastline near the Mull of Kintyre where they had a home and recording studio. We can perhaps imagine that it was their sanctuary that afforded them privacy and solitude away from intense public and media attention. It was where McCartney retreated after the breakup of the band The Beatles, one of the most famous and popular music groups of the 1960s of which he was a member.

The distinctive and haunting sound of the bagpipes are redolent of Scotland. The image of the Scottish bagpipe band marching along the coastline helps to recreate for us Màirìe's experience of living by the sea in the coastal village of Port Seton. The poignancy and relevance of this song, amplified by the stirring sound of the bagpipes, are reflected in the words that seem to echo Màirìe's feelings and capture her experience of having emigrated to Australia and her enduring longing for Scotland.

The image of the villagers taking part in the bonfire celebration shows the strong sense of community in the Scottish village, conjuring images of inclusion and belonging that Màirìe enjoys growing up as a child in Scotland. The singing and whooping noises of the villagers are characteristic of Scottish village celebrations such as she would have experienced as a child. This song and video mirror Màirìe's sentiments and are a culturally authentic depiction of Scottish village celebrations that she holds dear to her heart and for which she still yearns. It helps us gain a greater appreciation of the kind of life Màirìe left behind in Scotland.

A square peg in a round hole: Teenage years in Australia

Màirie arrives in Australia at the age of 13. She senses that her mother finds her an intrusion now that she is back together again with her husband, her lover. They are very much in love and Màirie's brother and wife have moved into their own house so she feels somewhat of an outsider in her own new home. She starts school in Australia in Year 9, the third year of high school, because the Scottish education system is highly regarded. She believes that she should go into Year 8 since she is imbued in Scottish history and lacks knowledge about Australia and Australian history. She asks to repeat Year 8 and there is a stigma associated with this among the other students. She does not have any friends at that time as all the other students already have formed their friendship groups.

One girl is assigned by a teacher to look after Màirie to help her settle into the school. They become good friends and form a bond that continues throughout their lives. Màirie finds it difficult to settle into school and feels like an outsider for a long time. She is perceived as different because of her Scottish family name. It is uncommon in Tasmania and people cannot pronounce it properly. She has a strong Scottish accent and looks different because she is taller than most of the other girls and has red hair and freckles. The first time Màirie visits the school for an interview she wears a ring that her aunt has given her and the friendship ring she received from her boyfriend because they are precious to her. They seem to provide her with a level of comfort because they represent the people that she is missing. The Principal scolds her and tells her that no rings are permitted and once again Màirie feels "humiliated" at school.

Other students have difficulty understanding Màirie. In high school, the boys tease her and the "cliquey girl groups" enjoy watching the boys tease her although she sits next to a girl in her Latin class who becomes her best friend. They have fun and enjoy learning to speak Latin together. Màirie asks her friend to repeat words in Australian English so she can learn how to pronounce them the way that she does. She teaches her Australian pronunciation that helps Màirie to develop an accent to disguise her Scottish accent. Over the years she improves at refining her Australian accent but never totally loses her Scottish brogue that remains a sign of difference or otherness.

One day a student remarks unkindly that she has a funny voice. She is taken aback as no-one has ever said that to her before and she considers the other students often to be rude, and their manners are not refined and seem quite abrupt. They ask her numerous questions and for the first time in her life she finds herself having to answer questions about what she is doing. She never needed to explain herself before and is placed in the position where she has to explore herself at a vulnerable time of adolescence and dealing with developmental changes.

The family lives in a flat instead of a house like most other people in Tasmania because they cannot afford to buy their own house and her parents do not want to incur a debt. Màirìe's father has a car and takes the family sightseeing on weekends to explore their new surroundings. Màirìe is a rebellious teenager refusing to get out of the car and instead plans ways to return to Scotland. She begins to save money with the intention of staying in Australia for two years until she can save the £200 needed for the passage back to Scotland. She manages to save only £5 in six months and comes to the realisation that she will not be able to reach her target and that her plans are futile. She resigns herself to living in Australia and decides to make the best of it by applying herself to her studies. On reflection she thinks that she studies longer and harder than she probably needs to but considers it as a way of having gained a deeper understanding about the richness of the world.

For a long time, it feels to her like she has no fun, no friends and works hard at school but she is successful and gains top marks and receives excellent reports, ultimately becoming Dux of the school and Head Prefect. She appears to have come a full circle from an insider in the small village, an outsider in her new school, to not only becoming an insider in her school in Australia but a leader amongst her peers—we might view this as a testament to her determination, resilience and ability to adapt to her new environment. Although she makes progress academically, she is anxious about going out with her friends because she does not know the social norms or how to behave in certain situations since the cultural rules and norms seem to be vastly different from the ones she knows. Hoffman shares similar thoughts as she describes going out with her Canadian friends,

Although I am not brave enough or hermit enough to stay home by myself every night, I'm a pretend teenager among the real stuff. There's too much in this car I don't like; I don't like the blue eyeshadow on Cindy's eyelids, or the grease on Chuck's hair ... And most of all, I hate having to pretend. (1989, pp. 118-119)

Màirie often feels patronised but at the age of 16 she starts being asked out by boys and her social life improves. Although she describes it as “a very bad time” she believes that in some ways her home in Australia is better than the Council house in Scotland where she slept with her mother after her father left. Helping to ease the transition and provide a sense of connectedness, there is another Scottish family with two boys who live nearby and who often visit and are like a second family to Màirie. They come from a different part of Scotland and help to fill in the gaps in her knowledge of Scottish history. She learns from them many things about Scotland and the way people live there. Màirie grows quite close to one of the boys who becomes her first boyfriend in Australia and they maintain a special bond of friendship over the years. Might this lasting bond be based on their shared cultural heritage? The church and Sunday School continue to be great influences for her in Australia. She joins the Girl Guides again, collects badges, and helps at the camps until she is in Year 12. She thinks she would not have done these things in Scotland because of the weather and the gang culture where this is not considered to be “on”.

Màirie talks about being comfortable with who she is at this point in her life but feels she never stops being Scottish although she has lived in Australia for 57 years and has spent the greater part of her life there. She stipulates, “I am still Scottish”. Màirie returns to visit Scotland. Once she even considers leaving her husband who was born in Australia and returning to live permanently in Scotland, highlighting her continued longing for Scotland. “Being Scottish has been my signifier, identifier. I need to have my own identity. I need to know who I am”, she declares. It has taken her a very long time to decide that she wants to live in Australia.

Màirie is concerned about what people think of her because she was born in Scotland and not perceived to be fully Australian. She is dismayed that a huge emphasis is placed on nationality in Australia and believes it affects people’s opportunities and that her cultural background causes her to fail to win jobs. She attributes it to people doing things differently in Australia. She is brought up with very strong moral values. She feels that she cannot change her morals or cut down “tall poppies”, the Australian slang term for putting down and criticising successful people because of envy or resentment. She views “elbowing people” out of the way as another Australian trait that she does not like. She recalls her father saying, “In Australia it is not what you know, but who you know”, but Màirie manages to excel in her career. She observes that it is different in Scotland where people value and respect educated and intelligent people.

Safe and sound: Reconciliation

Màirie tells me that until our conversations she has never thought, or spoken in such detail, about leaving Scotland. With some emotion, she says that she has never talked about that moment when she is told the family is going to emigrate to Australia, or the train trip from Port Seton, and the way she feels during the train journey. It is something that she keeps inside of herself for many years. Màirie believes that her mother did not worry about what she was doing to the children because of the loving bond between her parents. It becomes a source of distance between her and her mother for a long time that surfaces somewhat unexpectedly when Màirie travels for work to Alice Springs, a town near Uluru or Ayers Rock, a huge monolith close to the red centre of Australia where Aboriginal tribes have lived for millennia. It is a highly spiritual place for Indigenous Australians and it affects Màirie in such a way that it prompts her to reflect on aspects of her life on the plane trip back to Tasmania. By then many years have passed since her father has died and Màirie regrets that she has let so many years go by without sharing her thoughts with her mother. She decides that they should resolve the situation, and decides to express her feelings about the family's migration.

Sitting in her window seat at home, she writes a long letter to her mother about the way she feels about the decision to move to Scotland thinking, "This will either make or break our relationship". Ultimately, Màirie never sends the letter although she still has it. Coincidentally, after not hearing from her mother for two weeks, she receives a 15-page letter from her mother who lives in another town. She does not know what precipitated her mother's letter but perhaps the strained relationship troubled her too, as the letter deals with several issues that Màirie wants to raise but now does not need to do. She considers the letter has a healing effect on the "broken bit" and in the last few years of her mother's life they become close and enjoy each other's company.

Màirie recalls that the move from Scotland to Australia has been an extremely difficult journey although now that she is 70 years of age she has adopted a different perspective. Earlier in her life she views it as a negative experience but she now she sees it as having "formed part of who I have become". The feeling of "foreignness" seems to have almost disappeared and the

person that she has become is a source of pride to her. She believes it has helped to shape her and now views it as a positive experience. She is grateful for the university education she receives in Australia that she does not think she would have gained in Scotland, and her husband that she most likely would not have met.

Màirie believes that she would not have been as free in Scotland to become the person that she is in Australia. Being a very quiet person who prefers to read and study instead of socialise, she thinks she would have lost herself more in Scotland because of her wild side that saw her running among the rocks and on the streets. She considers herself to have been tamed in Australia and believes that she may not have “come out as well” if she had stayed in Scotland. Does she think that she would not have continued her education? Does she mean that she would have continued to follow the gang culture? Does she consider her standard of living may not have been as high?

Traditions are very important to Màirie. She loves the sound of bagpipes and misses Highland dancing. She learns to be content with country dancing in Australia instead. The source of her greatest regret is that since she never lived as an adult in Scotland she does not know family traditions. She never learns Gaelic words and tunes, and fails to understand the meaning of words and cultural terms like *skiendo* until one of her cousins who visits her in Australia tells her that it refers to a “dagger in the sock”. When she visits her aunts in Scotland she learns to speak a little Gaelic and discover the meaning of some Gaelic words. She states that she does not miss the language when she does not hear it being spoken but might this have led to Màirie’s love of learning languages? She describes speaking French as “liquid in my mouth” and feels that language helps her to adapt to and understand other people and cultures.

Màirie shows a strong interest in diasporas. She listens to stories about the Aboriginal people’s alienation from the land. She believes that she has an affinity with Indigenous people because the English people did the same to her Scottish ancestors and the Indigenous people of Scotland. This leads to her positive relationships with Indigenous people as she understands their past. It seems to affect her world orientation and she holds a strong view that people should not treat others unjustly or unfairly. It appears to stimulate her interest in reading books about people who lived during the World Wars in the 20th Century and who were sent off to

other countries to be imprisoned and incarcerated. She empathises with them without assuming their pain. It makes Mairie highly aware of the reality of being in a diaspora. She believes in the intrinsic equality of all people and that everyone has a unique story that is worth telling, evident in her comment, “We are very different but no one is better than another.”

The feeling of being “present for others” has been with Mairie for a long time. Since she has experienced the “big trial” of acceptance after being torn from her happy childhood in Port Seton she rallies to support others in pain and finds it easy to be generous. She says, “I like the place I have arrived. It has been a very painful but illuminating experience that has provided me with the basis for a good creative life”.

Mairie’s narrative reveals that the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon can involve having to deal with similar challenges and issues for people who move between places that are not culturally or linguistically very different. Mairie’s relocation from one English speaking country to another indicates that almost imperceptible idiosyncratic cultural signifiers such as different dialects, accents, words and phrases, mannerisms and social norms can distinguish us from others. It reminds us that change of spatiality between culturally and linguistically similar countries can pose acute challenges for children. It is not just children who emigrate from very diverse and different cultures who can experience these challenges.

Chapter 7 – TRAVEL AND TRANSITION

The narratives of the lives of Mario, Holly and Mairie are highly relevant and illuminating as accounts of personal change, challenge and development, providing broad insights that help to deepen our understanding of the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon. The three individuals are unique and so are their personal stories as well as their responses to their lived experiences, yet we can see commonalities too. The life narratives as recounted to me, and my own life story, are dependent on our autobiographical memory that Robyn Fivush tells us is, “a uniquely human form of memory that moves beyond recall of experienced events to integrate perspective, interpretation and evaluation across self, other, and time to create a personal history” (2011, p. 560).

She explains that the concepts of episodic and autonoetic memory proposed by Endel Tulving in *Episodic memory: From mind to brain* (2002) respectively involve memory of a specific experience related to time and space and, “the awareness of self having experienced the event in the past” (Fivush, 2011, p. 560). She makes a distinction between nondeclarative memory that involves little or no conscious thought, and declarative memory that is conscious awareness of, “explicit representations of past experiences” (p. 561). Drawing these elements together allows us to,

represent oneself as an experiencer of events, as a continuous being with a past, present and future that links specific episodic representations into a meaningful sequence of events that define a person and a life. (p. 563)

It seems consistent with the concept of embodied inquiry as, “autobiographical memory is composed of multiple sensory components that are stored and retrieved across multiple brain areas” (p. 564). Fivush explains that young children develop memory early in life, while the ability to create life narratives begins in middle childhood and develops during adolescence. This

suggests that we can view the life narratives contained in this inquiry as elements of each person's autobiographical memory since all the life stories begin when they are in middle childhood or adolescence.

Some major themes become evident to us as each of the stories unfold. As we reflect upon the narratives, many aspects of the life stories resonate with my own knowledge and lived experiences as an adult with a cross-cultural childhood, and with other research and scholarly work about this phenomenon. This chapter opens with an examination of the circumstances that led to the cross-cultural childhood for each person and goes on to explore the themes of belonging and connectedness, identity, culture, and language that emerge in the life narratives of this inquiry.

It is inevitable that I will recall previous tales from the three narratives and my own story as I elaborate, interpret and give meaning to the themes that emerge drawing to varying degrees on each person's story to elucidate understanding. There is a risk of repetition but it is justified to bring out the heuristic interpretive meaning that, "may not yet have internalized the true enigmatic and depthful nature of the phenomenological question" (van Manen, 2016, p. 376)—How does it feel to have had a cross-cultural childhood? In this chapter the interpretive framework for our heuristic exploration of this phenomenon includes the existential themes of lived relations—relationality, lived body—corporeality, lived space—spatiality, lived time—temporality, and lived things—materiality, because as van Manen discloses, "they belong to everyone's life world—they are universal themes of life" (2016, p. 302).

As we explore the narratives we examine how each person experiences the "Lived Self and Other" within the theme of relationality. Through the theme of corporeality, we look at the way they engage with the world with their bodies. The themes of spatiality and temporality that are closely linked and highly significant to the phenomenon of a cross-cultural childhood are closely examined in these narratives as van Manen says, "Space is an aspect of time, and time is experienced as space" (2016, p. 306). The concept of materiality is explored since, "The things are our world in its material thing-like reality" (p. 306).

Across the seas and over the skies: Embarking on a new life

In this section we will consider the circumstances that lead to migration and how they affect each person in an effort to deepen our understanding. Interestingly, the father of the family plays a key role in initiating the experience for all three of them, albeit in very different situations and for very different reasons. Who would have guessed that watching a race at the Olympic Games could have such a profound effect on one person and his family? Mario's father's obsession with Australia, with no experience and little knowledge of the country, ignited by a sprint race, leads to the family's migration from one side of the world to the other. We may speculate against the backdrop of the theme of spatiality as to what might have been the family's future if he had not been in the grandstands that day. What if an athlete from another country had won the race? Would it have prompted the family's move to that country? Would it have fuelled the father's passion to emigrate from Italy? Was he influenced by the perception of Australia as "the lucky country", as described in Donald Horne's 1964 book of the same title? Was he enamoured with the stereotype of the athletic bronzed Australian who loves sport? It is impossible to know the answers to these questions but we may speculate that it might have led to a different childhood and life for Mario.

It is originally Holly's father's idea for her to study abroad. He is the instigator of the move, with the support of his wife, resulting in Holly living in three countries by the age of 12. Her description of her father and his professional life suggests that he harboured a deep personal interest in other cultures possibly stimulated by his own experiences interacting and working with people from different countries. Whatever the cause, she leaves South Korea to study in India and then Australia. Expansive family conversations from the tender age of 6 help Holly to understand the perceived benefits of an international education and the opportunities it presents on a personal level and for her future employment.

Màirie's father is the key reason her family emigrates after he is offered a well-paid job as Captain of a ship in Australia. He accepts the position and initially moves to Australia alone as it is intended to be a temporary role. It is an opportunity that provides employment and financial security unavailable to him in Scotland. He enjoys his work and, most importantly, he falls in

love with the country—a new land of opportunity. Mairie's parents decide it is in the family's interest for them all to emigrate to Australia almost two years after her father's departure from Scotland. In my case, my cross-cultural childhood is a result of circumstances that occurred before I was born and part of my historicity due to war and my parents' decision to leave the past behind them within the existential theme of lived time. These narratives reflect common reasons for diasporas including war, a search for a better life, international education opportunities and, in the words of an English adage, a perception that "the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence".

The narratives suggest that the amount of personal autonomy exercised over the decision to emigrate affects each person's response to the lived experience. In our conversations, Mario does not speak about when and how he learns about his parents' decision to emigrate to Australia. He focuses instead on his mother's attitude and reactions. He describes their close relationship and his strong feelings for her because of all that he feels she has given up and endured for him with the move. The relationality of the lived experience appears to play a significant role in Mario's narrative, in respect to his attitude towards his mother, and his family in Italy. We might imagine that there must have been considerable discussion, debate and possibly arguments between his parents in the family home because of his mother's reluctance to emigrate before his father finally persuades her to agree, or can we view it as her giving up the fight?

The family lives in a small flat in Rome. Mario and his sister probably are present during some of the conversations yet given their young age they may not comprehend what is happening. Do the children, aged 8 and 10, really understand where they are going? Do they know where Australia is? Do they understand that they are leaving their home in Italy forever and that they will not be returning? It may be plausible for us to assume that the children do not grasp the significance of the life-defining move that they are about to experience. We may wonder if the parents themselves fully understand the implications of the family's emigration or does embodied understanding develop after they leave Italy?

Holly actively is involved in making the decision to leave South Korea and is given the choice of where she would like to study. She is consulted from the beginning and appears to be excited about studying in a different country with her wishes and preferences genuinely considered. She

does not comment on any fear or apprehension about leaving her parents or her home although she is only 11 years old when she embarks on her journey. The concept of spatiality does not appear to influence her response. She does not seem to be afraid of the great distance it will create between her and her family or of going to a place where she does not know anyone. Does her excitement override any anxiety she may be feeling? It is her childlike but extensive research of other countries, and traditions and cultures, that helps her decide to study in India and she is not disappointed with her choice after she arrives, or later in life, when she reflects on the experience. We do not know the reasons that she chooses Australia as her next study destination but perhaps it is due to the level of medical care available there since she has to leave India for health reasons.

Màirie does not recall being advised of the family's migration until a few weeks before they are due to leave Scotland and is vehemently opposed to the notion as soon as she is made aware of it. As she re-tells her story she is not certain if anyone had spoken to her about it earlier but she remembers distinctly that it comes as a shock to her when she hears the news for the first time. She reacts strongly and makes her feelings known in a variety of ways, reflecting the concept of embodied understanding. When she first hears the news, she is so perplexed that it triggers an involuntary physical reaction with her swinging her arms from side to side. We might consider it as a sign of anger and defiance as she shouts that she will not go to Australia. She displays her denial and resistance by locking herself in the bathroom. In a gesture that we may interpret as avoidance, she runs out of the room whenever the migration is mentioned, reflecting her underlying feelings. By behaving in this way is she reflecting Todres' view that, "the lived body is 'the place' where intimate understanding of both experience and language happen," and that, "The lived body characterised as the 'messenger' of the unsaid, provides possibilities for understanding situations that exceed any precise formulation or patterning of it" (2004, p. 5)? Perhaps we can view Màirie's physical responses as her ways of communicating that which she is unable to express in words.

She does not remember anyone asking for her opinion and seemingly feels a sense of powerlessness about events in her life and the future, and this lack of agency may contribute to her intense reactions. This is consistent with the views of Pollock and Van Reken, (2009, pp. 159-165) and Kathleen Daniel (2011, p. 160-163), who suggest that denial, anger, withdrawal, rebellion and unresolved grief are common reactions in children in such situations. In seeking to

understand the reason that Mairie is not told about the move earlier, perhaps her mother, knowing she is a sensitive child, anticipates her reaction and strives to ease the pain by reducing the length of time that she has to ponder leaving.

Pollock and Van Reken (2009) tell us that the decision about the right timing to let children know about a family's move to another country is an important one that can cause considerable concern for parents. They go on to state that departure is always difficult for children moving between countries but the process can be facilitated by providing them with enough time, not only to prepare for the move physically, but sufficient time to be able to prepare mentally and emotionally to bring closure (pp. 180-181). The responses vary and some people decide not to tell their children beforehand and we can imagine that it may come as a shock for them, as in Mairie's case. We can view the importance of right timing as reflecting the existential themes of temporality and corporality with the need for the lived body to have sufficient time to adjust to new circumstances and develop embodied understanding.

Pollock and Van Reken go on to identify four logs needed to build what they term a "raft" for healthy closure including, "Reconciliation, Affirmation, Farewells and Think Destination" (2009, p. 181). If Mairie had built her own raft before leaving Port Seton perhaps the pain of separation may not have been so harsh for her. Perhaps resolving issues and healing relationships with some of her cousins who perceive her to be different because of her accent, or the teacher who she feels bullies and frightens her, may have helped to reconcile some of her negative feelings towards them. Could it have helped to ensure she was not taking any unresolved issues as "unwanted baggage" with her to Australia?

Mairie speaks fondly about one of her teachers whom she considers as having a significant effect on the person that she becomes. Years later when she returns to visit the school she makes a point of telling the teacher how much she feels that she influenced her development. Perhaps her transition might have been easier if she had the chance to tell her teacher how she felt. Reflections like the following by Hoffman illustrate the importance of lived human relations as she describes her farewell to her beloved piano teacher before emigrating with her family from Poland to Canada. It is a painful experience yet it seems to provide her with an opportunity to gain a sense of closure.

“What will you miss the most?” she asks me kindly. “Little things, I think,” I tell her. “The napoleon pastry from our bakery. Not knowing what’s in Cross Section.” Then, as I let the question sink in, it comes upon me that I’ll miss much more than that, and I say, “Everything. Cracow. The school. Basia. You. Everything.” Pani Witeszczak strokes my hair to let me know that she understands, and from then on I don’t talk much, because I can’t stop myself from crying. It turns out that this is the person and the room I can least bear to leave; after all, it’s here that I’ve felt most intimately understood; it’s here that I’ve felt most intensely all my hopes for the future. (1989, p. 81)

If we accept the view that positive affirmation of the special people in children’s lives with whom they have established bonds and meaningful relationships is a “log” in the “raft” of healthy closure, is this what Mairie’s teenage boyfriend unknowingly is doing when he gives her a friendship ring that we can view within the existential theme of materiality as a token of the special friendship that they share? She smiles as she tells me about the ring that appears to bring back happy memories. Her reaction suggests that material objects can stimulate, create and re-create feelings. Does Mairie still have that ring? If so, what importance does it have for her and what emotions does it conjure after all these years?

Leaving on a Jet Plane, Peter, Paul and Mary



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSwp-25ivXc#action=share>

All my bags are packed,
I’m ready to go
I’m standing here outside your door
I hate to wake you up to say goodbye

But the dawn is breakin'
It's early morn
The taxi's waitin'
He's blowin' his horn
Already I'm so lonesome
I could cry

So kiss me and smile for me
Tell me that you'll wait for me
Hold me like you'll never let me go
I'm leavin' on a jet plane
I don't know when I'll be back again
Oh, babe, I hate to go ...

Every place I go, I'll think of you
Every song I sing, I'll sing for you
When I come back, I'll wear your wedding ring ...

Now the time has come to leave you
One more time
Let me kiss you
Then close your eyes
I'll be on my way ...

Leavin' on a jet plane
I don't know when I'll be back again
Oh babe I hate to go

Leaving on a Jet Plane was written in 1967 by singer songwriter John Denver while he was at an airport waiting to board a flight. The song expresses the pain of separation that features so strongly in Mairie's narrative. It is included in this thesis because it seems to capture the feeling of heartbreak and sense of loss and longing that physical separation can cause and that we may be able to relate to our own experiences. The lead vocals are sung by Mary Travers of the folk group Peter, Paul and Mary. Her singing helps to remind us of the young girl, Mairie leaving her home and her first love whom she may have married as the song suggests, given the small close-

knit community in which they live. It reminds us of Màirie's frequent ruminations as an adult about what her life might have been if she had remained in Scotland. The lyrics include references to loneliness, tears and a reluctance to leave that seem to mirror Màirie's feelings having been torn from her home. They help us to gauge the depth of her emotions and to empathise with her and all those who reluctantly or willingly leave their homeland, since leaving can be a painful separation even if it is by choice.

Farewells to special places, pets and possessions as well as people are an important element of closure according to Pollock and Van Reken, who identify the importance of physical possessions during stages of transition as often being linked to memories (2009, pp. 77-78). Consistent with the theme of materiality, they tell us that connections are built with physical possessions that can serve as reminders of people and events and stir emotions. They provide emotional security and stability and can have a converse effect when left behind. Màirie speaks of not knowing what happens to the dollhouse that is made especially for her and that is unlike any other she has ever seen. She describes the "most beautiful desk" that her brothers make for her and she describes the books that she gives away as her "most prized possessions". It is the same for Daniel leaving her, "big fuzzy stuffed abominable snowman", and, "in each town I had left an important friend behind" (2011, p. 135). Cathleen Hadley, who is an artist, writes about the pain of having to give away her paintings as she describes the loss of separation as she moves between countries (in Bell-Villada et al., 2011, p. 159).

We may view Màirie's lingering desire to go back and reclaim the books from her old primary school over 50 years later as a reflection of how much they mean to her. Or can we view it within the existential theme of temporality and consider the dollhouse and books as objects from the past that act as reminders of a happy and stable childhood where she felt secure? Is she displaying unresolved grief? Is the lived body still trying to develop embodied understanding and come to terms with the loss since it appears she has not had closure in this area? Similarly, Daniel seems to deal with her losses at the time yet it is something she carries with her that manifests itself later in her life after the death of a close friend, "I seemed simply to collapse under the weight of ill-defined but deeply felt accumulated losses" (2011, p. 141). Does this reflect the vulnerability that comes with openness and relationality because of our intersubjectivity with others within the existential theme of lived human relations where, "the

inner self needs an Other to affirm its sense of continuity and identity” (van Manen, 2016, p. 138)?

In seeking to gain a greater understanding of these losses it may be helpful to relate them to our own collection of personal treasures and mementos we have accumulated over the course of our lives and that have become part of our own personal history. They can elicit memories of special people, places and times, and losing them or leaving them behind can be heartbreaking for children—and adults. We might consider possessions as much more than just physical objects, instead viewing them as reminders of our relations with other people, and past times and places.

Three weeks does not give Mairie much time to “Think Destination”. It is not clear from our conversation how much she knows about Australia before leaving Scotland beyond what her father writes in his letters. She describes herself as “not worldly”. It would seem from this comment that she knows very little about life in Australia and, with the shock and busyness of leaving Port Seton, there may have been little time to conduct any research. Unlike Holly, who moves to another country at a similar age and is eager to travel to a distant place and shows little fear of the unknown, Mairie does not want to leave her home and is filled with trepidation and fear of the unknown. Let us consider these two very different sets of responses in light of the two different circumstances that lead to migration. Holly has several years to prepare mentally and physically for her departure from South Korea, supporting her embodied understanding while Mairie only has three weeks. Holly is consulted from the start and her feelings are taken into consideration. On the other hand, Mairie feels that her feelings are never taken into consideration and she perceives that her mother’s personal desires take precedence.

Mairie talks about feeling powerless and it seems to create angst and affect the lived relations between mother and daughter for most of their lives. We might view this metaphorically as the rug being pulled out from under Mairie’s feet without her having any say in it and not knowing how and where she is going to land—a disorientation of the embodied self within the existential theme of lived place. She does not speak about the boat trip to Australia. Is this an example of the untold part of the narrative Josselson describes as “hermeneutics of restoration” that “assumes any given told story refers to an untold one as well” (2004, p. 18)? She reminds us that

in our interpretive work we need to consider, “how the story is construed and how its parts are ordered and juxtaposed, noticing the ‘negative spaces’ of silence and omissions ... that involve ‘reading between the lines’” (p. 18).

If we adopt this stance, can we imagine Mairie’s journey is filled with emotional turmoil, uncertainty and fear and that she chooses to omit it from her narrative to avoid recalling the unpleasant memories and re-living the pain, leaving us to fill in the gaps ourselves? Or has she erased it from her memory so that she can forget the negative emotions? Does my mother’s life-long fear and dislike of the ocean reflect her emotional turmoil following the trauma of the war and her lengthy and unpleasant journey from Germany to Australia? Might this be a response of the lived body to the tragic events that she experienced? Mario and Holly’s relatively short journeys by plane provide little time for reflection about their migration or their emotions before entering their new world and new life. The lived body in their cases appears to be caught in the flurry of activity of travelling to a new country. As we reflect on the circumstances of the migrations of Mario, Holly and Mairie, in the next section we consider the transition process and examine the range of emotions as each person settles into their new environment.

The roller coaster ride: Where am I?

The change in spatiality is a major aspect of the cross-cultural phenomenon and we now examine the effect of this change on each person. Leaving their country of birth to live in another land is the beginning of major changes in the lives of Mario, Holly and Mairie that involves a transition for each person and their families. The Oxford Dictionary (2017) defines transition as, “The process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another”. The most obvious change is in the sense of lived space that alters their location and living conditions and yet the period of transition is more far-reaching. It seems to have a significant effect on their state of being affecting the embodied self through the physical, emotional, social and mental state of each person. Pollock and Van Reken identify five stages in the transition process—involvement, leaving, transition, entering and re-involvement that include a range of responses such as excitement, rejection, superficial accommodation of the new environment, and gradual adjustment resulting in acceptance of the new culture (2009, pp. 66-73). The life narratives of

Mario, Holly and Mairie reveal that they experience similar patterns of emotions as they settle into their new environment.

Mario and Mairie's accounts of their lives before migration appear to reflect the involvement stage. Mario's living arrangements support a sense of security within the theme of spatiality. They facilitate close family relationships and a sense of belonging and connectedness in lived human relations. As a child, Mario sees his extended family most days and living in the small compound results in everyone knowing him and his family connections.

Mairie speaks at length about her life in Port Seton and as we reflect on her early childhood we develop a sense of her strong attachment to the small fishing village where she grew up and her feeling of belonging. Her narrative suggests the place means a great deal to her while she is living there and later in her life. She is well known and an individual in her own right in Port Seton, recognised for her personal qualities and talents, and her familial connections. She has many friends and a fledgling boyfriend. She is involved in community activities and wins prizes for her academic achievements. Her crowning glory of being selected as Gala Queen endorses her social acceptance and standing among her friends and peers. Her narrative showing her difficulty in settling into her new school suggests that personal relationships, social acceptance and recognition can take time to establish and evolve and can affect our feelings of security, stability, confidence, self-esteem and well-being.

This view is supported by Ilios Kotsou, Christophe Leys and Pierre Fossion whose research indicates that acceptance, "is a robust predictor of psychological health such as anxiety, depression, stress, and happiness" (2018, p. 144). Their findings highlight that involvement tends to produce positive emotions and re-involvement characterises a successful transition after negotiating one's way through the entering stage, whereas lack of acceptance can have an opposite effect. Much like a plane arriving at its destination, arriving in a new country may involve a bumpy landing as we see in all three narratives. Mairie's arrival in Australia and the loss of family and friendship connections as a result cause her much unhappiness and anxiety, similar to Mario's experience.

Mario does not speak of any means by which his parents prepare him for his move to Australia but their actions on arrival suggest that they want him to settle back into routine as quickly as possible. Mario starts school for the first time in Australia within a week of arriving in Adelaide. Do his parents see it as a way of him learning English quickly and building relationality with new friends or providing some continuity and stability across temporality and spatiality since he had begun school in Italy? The first attempts are unsuccessful reflecting how upset and unsettled he is and how difficult he finds the transition. The long school summer break gives Mario time to familiarise himself with his new surroundings.

This seems to help as the next time he starts school in Australia is much more successful, highlighting perhaps the need for time for adjustment and the development of embodied understanding during transition. Mario does not mention any school programs that help him with his transition, although today many schools in Australia offer new arrivals programs and support for students who do not speak English, and teach about Australia and Australian culture to help them settle in. Although schools “enable children and adolescents to learn vast amounts of cultural knowledge in just a matter of years”, (Hinton in della Chiesa, Scott & Hinton, 2012, p. 413), what constitutes Australian culture is often a matter of debate since Australia is a culturally diverse nation.

Holly describes many emotions during her transition and re-involvement stage in both India and Australia. She is excited about living in India. She displays a positive attitude and seems to relish and make the most of the opportunities that present themselves to her to have new experiences using her senses including seeing, tasting and doing new activities. Richard Kearney’s exposition of carnal hermeneutics tells us that the physical senses play a key role in interpreting our experiences through, “a deep and inextricable relationship between sensation and interpretation” (2015, p. 101). He goes on to say that, “Flesh is the cradle of both perception and the world. The phenomenon of multiple reversibility extends from touch and sight to language itself, revealing flesh as a shared membrane between body and world” (p. 111). This view is echoed by van Manen who writes, “memories are released by sensory organs and limbs (touch, sound, smell, vision) ... memories are experienced in the things and the spatial contexts of our world, and we may release them by our bodies” (2016, p. 217).

Holly's description of girls comparing physical features suggests an awareness, appreciation and acceptance of diversity. It seems that the other girls at the boarding school welcome her novelty because she describes feeling like "a superstar". Perhaps this helps to ease her transition and make her feel comfortable in the new environment. It appears she perceives her new lived space as a place for exploration and discovery that appeases her curiosity about other countries and cultures. Involvement with others and participating in different activities helps Holly to cross the cultural bridge (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Zilber, 2004) and feel a sense of connectedness and belonging, and relationality that seems to assist with her transition. She enjoys enculturating herself, unlike Mario who defines himself as Italian, and Mairie who largely inhabits her own inner world for a long time.

Holly's main motivation in both India and Australia is her twin desire to improve her English and make new friends. She develops friendships with other girls and teachers easily in India and attributes it to personality and common interests rather than cultural reasons. We can perhaps view this as important for developing relationality and her social survival. She finds it more difficult in Australia and instead of celebrating difference as she does at her previous school, she feels the need to adopt strategies to minimise her differences in order to fit in. We can empathise with her loneliness and sadness when she tells us that she spends each evening crying alone in her room in the boarding house when she first arrives.

Like Mario, Holly says that the transition was easier when she was younger and her narrative discloses that she puts considerable effort into being accepted. Within the notion of temporality, is transition easier when we are younger because we have not yet developed many lived human relations and so cutting emotional ties is less painful? Or is it that we have not yet developed embodied understanding of the significance and effect of the change in our lived space? She shows persistence and determination by "crashing" other girls' rooms and eventually making many friends. Hoffman observes that,

As a radically marginalized person, you have two choices: to be intimidated by every situation, every social stratum, or to confront all of them with the same labeling vision, the same brash and stubborn spunk ... the sense that survival is in my own hands. (1989, p. 157)

Holly's closest friend in Australia, Lara, is another international student from Germany. We may ask if it is a reflection that perhaps she is not truly accepted by the Australian students? Does she share more in common with Lara who has had a cross-cultural childhood rather than with the other girls who have not experienced it?

Màirie seems to find the transition and re-involvement stage to be challenging. Is this because she is an unwilling participant in the process? Or is it due to her having greater understanding of the implications of the move? Is it because she is dealing with the changes associated with adolescence? Holly tells us that she finds moving to India easier than Australia because she is younger. Our own experiences may teach us that adolescence can be a very difficult phase for teenagers, let alone someone who has to deal with her world figuratively being turned upside down by changing countries and hemispheres, a reflection of her altered spatiality. Might this be more difficult because there are hardly any other Scottish people in Launceston where she lives that leads to her missing connectedness and human relations that is such a strong feature of Màirie's life in Port Seton?

In India Holly is surrounded by people who come from different countries and like her, are mainly from an Asian background. Mario lives in an Italian enclave in Adelaide so he has much in common with the people around him. Màirie on the other hand, has a strong accent and looks different from the other students with her red hair and freckled skin. The other students have limited knowledge of Scotland and little acquaintance with Scottish people. She frequently needs to explain her actions and expressions that she has previously taken for granted.

In addition, the theme of relationality poses an added challenge for Màirie of coping with the family dynamics when her brother, his wife and their small baby move out, and the close loving relationship between her parents makes Màirie feel like an intruder in her own home. She is so unhappy that her initial reaction is to return to Scotland as soon as possible and, in her mind, she secretly plans to save enough money for the airfare. We might view this as van Manen describes through the lens of spatiality as, "an inner and outer world" (2016, p. 305) in which she outwardly seems to accept living in Australia yet inwardly makes plans to return to Scotland. It is her eventual acceptance by her school friends and success with her studies that is valued by the whole school community that seem to lead to her re-involvement in her new setting. The lived

human relations developed through intersubjectivity of self and other, and changing perceptions of Mairie seem to play a significant role in her acceptance.

Mario too shows resistance to change and transition. Once he has settled into life in Adelaide he strongly resists changing suburbs and schools, and this leads to conflicts with his parents, reflecting the importance of spatiality. He seems to desire the security and stability of the Italian enclave and the thought of moving again is very painful for him, especially as he becomes older and can understand better the implications. It is an attitude that seems to pervade all his life as he continues to live his adult life within an Italian domain. The only relocation he considers is returning to Italy, highlighting the value he places on lived human relations. This we may interpret through an existential lens of lived time as a yearning to return to a happier time with his whole family together.

The narratives suggest that transition can be like a roller coaster with peaks and troughs, and twists and turns that can trigger a range of emotions including anxiety, fear, uncertainty, excitement, sadness, anger, loneliness, and a longing to belong and be accepted. It is the last concept of belonging that we explore in the next section.

Chapter 8 – REFLECTIONS OF A CROSS-CULTURAL CHILDHOOD

Connections and disconnections: Longing to belong

Chuka Ifeagwazi, JohnBosco Chukwuorji and Endurance Zacchaeus assert that, “The need to belong is one of the strongest human needs and the need to belong and find meaning can have devastating consequences for wellbeing” (2015, p. 527). There seems to be a strong relationship between belonging and connectedness that relates to the existential theme of lived human relations. Beth Crisp (2010) describes four types of association including connectedness as a precursor to belonging, and connectedness reinforcing belonging, and she declares that these two states can exist without the other. She tells us that, “there may well be a gulf to be crossed after making connections before feeling one truly belongs” (p. 125). Her view is supported by Judith Jordan who writes,

Recent findings from the world of neuroscience suggest that human beings are “hardwired to connect”, that we come into the world primed to connect and to find responsiveness. We also arrive primed to be responsive, to engage with others. Our survival depends on finding a responsive other person, not just to provide physical nourishment but to engage with us and stimulate our emotional and neurological growth. (2012, pp. 394-395)

The narratives of Mario, Holly and Mairie reveal that belonging is important to them and has a central effect on their lives, before and after migration. There is a strong correlation in their life stories that reflects the need for belonging and connectedness in their efforts to build human relationality. Aligned with Jordan’s statement their respective narratives reveal that they are keen to make connections and are responsive to other people eventually leading to their social survival

and physical and emotional well-being. Mario's family maintains ties with relatives in Italy after their migration, particularly with his *Nonna*, but the cost of international telephone calls, distance and time result in the ties being loosened over the years. The sense of connectedness with family in Italy in the early days of Mario's migration appears strong.

The community in Adelaide that Mario and his family first join is made up predominantly of Italian expatriates and people with an Italian background. It helps to provide Mario with "an ongoing sense of community". We may consider this informal social arrangement helps to provide him with a sense of familiarity and a sense of belonging through shared language and customs. It appears to be an expanded and supportive network of people with similar backgrounds and shared values and understandings. Crisp tells us that, "Connecting with others in such organisations may be important not just for migrants but their descendants" (2016, p. 126). My own ties with the Polish expatriate community remain strong with my attending Polish festivals, celebrations, religious services and social occasions as a means of maintaining my cultural connections and sense of belonging with the Polish community in Adelaide.

We see that ethnic enclaves can provide valuable support for new migrants. Crisp acknowledges they are important for, "maintaining connections with their origins, either directly or indirectly, through maintaining cultural links, [and] can reinforce a sense of belonging" (2010, p. 126). They also have the potential to cause a sense of alienation with those who do not share the same background and who can be left feeling unwelcome or as outsiders creating an "existential insideness and existential outsideness" (Crossley in McAdams & Bowman, 2001, p. 286). Does this sense of alienation lead to discrimination and rejection by members of the host culture? Do some people feel intimidated and threatened that they are being outnumbered? Daniel suggests such feelings often are based on fear, lack of information and misunderstanding as, "People naturally make assumptions about others with what information they have, and in the absence of first hand data, they fill in the blanks with their own preconceptions and projections" (2011, p. 147).

Mario makes friends with boys with whom he attends the local primary school and many of them become his life-long friends. Ironically, it is Mario's father who has little connectedness with other expatriates and is not able to develop a sense of belonging. Crisp reminds us that,

“people don’t always feel they readily belong in the places or groups where one might imagine they fit” (2010, p. 124). It appears to lead to his sense of alienation in Australia as a new migrant since he has no connection with either the Australian or expatriate Italian community. Has he lost, as Taylor suggests, “the essential link between identity and a kind of orientation”? Taylor explores this by writing, “The disorientation and uncertainty about where one stands as a person seems to spill over into a loss of grip on one’s stance in physical space” (1989, p. 28). Perhaps this characterises Mario’s father’s disconnection and alienation in Australia. Crisp tells us, “some level of belonging is a constant requirement, providing a sense of surety to be oneself” (2010, p. 124).

Ethnic clubs and shared activities help to strengthen his sense of connectedness and belonging. Throughout his life in Australia Mario appears to seek the security of belonging and maintains a connection with the Italian expatriate community. Moving houses and schools seems to expose new wounds. His reaction is so strong that he describes the thought of breaking ties as “traumatic” and he feels “awkward and out of place” when he loses what we might perceive as his “safety net”. We can see relationality and spatiality connecting in these comments. This is highlighted when he says he marries a woman from an Italian heritage whose father he describes as “the pillar of the Adelaide Italian community”.

His friendship group and the area where he lives continue to reflect and strengthen his connections and sense of belonging within the Italian community. It leads to his understanding of the difficulties associated with relocation and he gravitates to people who have shared a similar experience like the English work colleague who migrates to Australia. Pollock and Van Reken refer to this as a tendency to feel the “sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background” (2009, p. 13). The existential theme of lived human relations is reflected in their view.

van Manen reminds us that, “as singular persons we can only become who we are through community; the community of family, neighborhood, workplace, volunteer activities, political associations, and so on” (2016, pp. 103-104). It appears that Mario’s sense of belonging and not belonging is based on ethnicity and his self-identification, reinforced by calling Australians derogatory names like “kangaroo”. He acknowledges that as a young man he engages in

“borderline racism” when he and his friends taunt other football supporters from different cultural backgrounds. He understands how hurtful being perceived as “the other” can be. Watching his father being denigrated at the petrol station because of his Italian background is a singular experience for Mario from which he shields his father. He is taken aback when he and his friends are put down by strangers at a fast food outlet. It takes just one three letter word, ‘wog’, to make him feel affronted and that he is not accepted and not perceived as an Australian although he now considers that he has assimilated into Australian society.

He expresses disappointment that ethnic gangs and disputes between ethnic groups still exist in schools, something Todres acknowledges to be a, “primordial belonging, the need to belong does not go away, even if it means belonging to some ‘thing’, some general category, some specialised turning ourselves and others into grasped objects” (2007, p. 114). Mario is very surprised and confronted when he visits Rome to find that he feels like a stranger even amongst his own family. After longing to return to Italy and strongly identifying with his Italian heritage, he is dispirited to feel distanced from his family. It culminates in him deciding that “it is a different Italy”, one where he cannot seem to reclaim his Italian-ness. It leads to him questioning his own identity and sense of belonging as he loses his sense of connectedness.

Belonging and acceptance are two critical issues for Holly when she moves to India and Australia. Her comments reflect the significance of the existential theme of lived human relations as she tells us it is vitally important for her “to fit in” with her peers and have friends. She makes conscious efforts to be accepted although she concludes that friendships are made because people “just connect” because of similar personalities and interests. She says,

Friends and teachers are universal. It is something that brings people together. We do look different and we speak different languages and we have different cultural backgrounds and everything but there is something that always bonds people together that ignores all the differences.

In India, her sense of belonging seems to develop more easily perhaps because there is greater diversity among the students and staff. Her apparent open-mindedness, receptivity to new cultures and willingness to try different things appear to help her to be accepted. She is more sensitive in Australia about how she is perceived and how people respond to her, suggesting that

her sense of relationality is heightened in her new spatiality. In Australia, the school community is more homogenous and there are very few Asian students or staff at the school with most of the other boarders being from an Anglo-Saxon and Caucasian background. Is she more conscious of her Asian background and appearance because she is in the minority in the boarding house? Does this reflect the importance that corporeality can play in acceptance and belonging? She feels that language affects her connectedness with other students who have difficulty understanding her. It seems to frustrate them and limits her conversations with others, so she works at improving her English.

She appears conscious of and wants to avoid social exclusion. She feels that to be accepted she needs to be more like the other girls, sensing that her cultural background makes others perceive that she is different. We can perhaps view her as acting like a cultural chameleon as she tries to hide elements of herself to conform to the group norms and behaviours (Pollock & Van Reken 2009, p. 100; Daniel, 2011, p. 149). We can see her determination to belong as she erases all her Korean songs and her Korean friends' contacts. So strong is her desire to be perceived to be like the other girls and to be accepted and belong that she limits her conversations with her parents. In doing so, is she eradicating her past and altering her relationality with her parents and friends in South Korea?

We might assume that she experiences a range of difficult emotions as she attempts to eliminate her Korean-ness. Does she feel sad, disappointed or frustrated that she needs to resort to such measures to fit in? She appears to shed elements of the layers of her Korean-ness and Indian-ness to become "Australian Holly". This seems to indicate that, "belonging is associated with subjective notions of identity" (Crisp, 2010, p. 124). The names she chooses to describe herself—"Korean Holly", "Indian Holly", "Australian Holly", "Multicultural Holly"—seem to reflect her sense of belonging within the existential themes of time and place based on her particular location and stage of life. As surprising as this may seem, it is a conscious strategy to identify herself in her new surroundings.

Can we attribute Mairie's difficulty settling into Australia to the issue of belonging that incorporates the existential theme of relationality? In Scotland, she is part of a large family ensconced in the life of the small village community and school with her own friendship groups

that appear to result in a strong sense of connectedness as well as belonging. She comes from an established family that is well known in the village, providing her with a robust support network. She has strong connections with nine aunts and uncles and numerous cousins in Port Seton alone and even more in Edinburgh, her mother's home city. She has lived all her childhood in the village and reaches adolescence when she migrates to Australia where there are minimal family members. We may view this within the theme of lived human relations as she recalls vivid childhood memories and appears nostalgic when she reflects on her early life back in Scotland. It seems that she continues to miss the comfort of belonging in the way that she did there.

As she recalls her early days after migration it is perhaps not surprising that she develops a close friendship with the only other Scottish family with which she becomes acquainted in Tasmania. Does it provide the lived body with a sense of security within a new spatiality? Does the shared cultural heritage provide a substitute family and a foundation for relationality that she finds difficult to establish at first with others in Australia? Fran Martin and Fazal Rizvi in their paper, "Making Melbourne: digital connectivity and international students' experience of locality" provide an example that may support the view that shared backgrounds foster relationality. They cite a Chinese student studying in Australia who describes speaking with strangers from her home country,

"When they are discussing the road, how to get there, and I hear them I say, 'Can I help you?' in Shanghainese. And they say 'Ohh, you are Shanghainese'... They are tourists, but when they see me they feel really like [I am] their relative" (2014, p. 1023).

While Màirìe eventually becomes Head Prefect at school in Year 12 and is accepted by her peers, it is the culmination of a lengthy process that takes several years, suggesting that in the meanwhile she still may be living in a state of "in-between-ness" where she has not yet developed embodied understanding of her new lived space. Can we view her opinion that she misses out on job opportunities as an adult because she had not been born in Australia as reflecting that she never develops a complete sense of belonging? Màirìe's experiences reflect the link between connectedness and belonging. She says that all her life she experiences a sense of difference and separation, even in Port Seton because of her mother's background and her insistence that Màirìe speak the "King's English".

In time, she joins clubs and resumes activities in Australia in which she has been involved in Scotland. They seem to provide her with familiarity and continuity that has been lost with her move to Australia, and an opportunity to build new relationships with people outside of school who hold common interests. Quoting Taket et al. (2009), Crisp says that, “social connectedness recognises acceptance, opportunity, equity, justice, citizenship, expression and validation as the machinery of connectedness” (2010, p. 124). Mairie’s sense of social connectedness is validated by her election as Head Prefect.

Her sense of connectedness seems to extend to people whom she does not know but who have shared similar feelings of disconnection from their homelands through diaspora or unfair treatment at the hands of others. She seeks ways to deepen her embodied understanding by reading books and talking to people who have had these lived experiences. Is this her effort to understand better and accept her own reactions to her personal diaspora? Or does it reflect her relationality in that she feels she shares more in common with those who have experienced diaspora than the people around her?

In this section we have considered the importance of belonging and connectedness as part of the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon. We now build on our understanding of these concepts in the following section as we explore the link between connectedness and belonging with the development of identity.

So who am I after all? The eternal quest

Todres illustrates the importance of identity as he writes, “The existential question is: What am I part of; what is me and what is not me? This is a question about the self, about how the part relates to the whole, the ‘inner’ to the ‘outer’” (2011, p. 106). The notion of belonging is inextricably linked with the concept of identity that emerges as a major theme in all three narratives. The word ‘identity’ originates from the Latin word *idem* meaning the “same” (Oxford Learners Dictionary online, 2017) suggesting that identity is related to belonging to a group of people who share a “sameness”. This is consistent with the view of Todres who states that,

We know ourselves through others. This dialogue of self and others encourages specialised self-perceptions. In living a human life, we ‘become someone’ and live the rhythm of self-sameness and otherness. (p. 130)

His comments disclose that our subjective self is influenced by our intersubjectivity with others. van Manen, in his exposition of Paul Ricoeur’s concept of identity, explains two different interpretations of identity—“self-sameness” and “selfhood” (2016, p. 138). He tells us that there is a difference between “continuity of self” and “sameness of self” and that they are connected to temporality and personal history. The identity of the self as *memeté* changes internally as our thinking and attitudes change through constant reinterpretation, and externally as our physical body changes over the course of our lives. The self as *ipséité* on the other hand, does not change—providing continuity of self. Adopting this view, it is changes in the notion of self-sameness or *memeté* that is reflected in the narratives that are the focus of this section.

Our identity begins with our names that distinguish us from other people and, “call their [our] presence into being, as it were” (van Manen, 2016, p. 20). Names can create a sense of belonging and relationality, yet for those of us from a different cultural background than most people around us, it can have the opposite effect and arouse feelings of not belonging and perceptions of being different. As a student at school Mario “sweats drops of blood” as teachers struggle to pronounce his name and when he becomes a teacher, he is called “Mr D.” by his students for the same reason. In India, Holly assumes a name given to her by her school friends so that it is easier for them to pronounce. She keeps her new name and even her family and friends in South Korea use it, to the initial consternation of her parents, who gradually accept it.

The students at Mairie’s school have never heard her name or seen it written in that way before she arrives in Tasmania. It makes her feel different from the other students and self-conscious of her name. A 60-year-old woman whom I know who emigrated to Australia with her parents from Germany at the age of 8, remembers starting school and being told by her teacher that her name is Ingrid, not Igrid. She corrects the teacher and repeats that her name is Igrid but the teacher tells her she will be called Ingrid and from that day on for the rest of her life she is known as Ingrid. It is difficult to know her feelings at the time. Is she hurt? Is she annoyed? Is she embarrassed that the name her parents gave her is not acceptable to the teacher? Does she ever consider reverting to her given name?

Hoffman describes her and her sister's name changes from Ewa to Eva, and Alina to Elaine, on their first day at school in Canada. Her account provides us with valuable insights into how Ingrid may well have felt.

My sister and I hang our heads wordlessly under this careless baptism. The teacher then introduces us to the class, mispronouncing our last name - "Wydra"- in a way we've never heard before. We make our way to a bench at the back of the room; nothing much has happened, except a small, seismic mental shift. The twist in our names takes them a tiny distance from us - but it's a gap into which the infinite hobgoblin of abstraction enters. Our Polish names didn't refer to us; they were as surely us as our eyes or hands. These new appellations, which we ourselves can't yet pronounce, are not us. They are identification tags, disembodied signs pointing to objects that happen to be my sister and myself. We walk to our seats, into a roomful of unknown faces, with names that make us strangers to ourselves. (1999, p. 105)

This moving description shows the significant effect of Hoffman's imposed name change, that we can possibly view as a denial of the girls' identities, and a disconnection between lived body and embodied understanding. Justine Pas describes this as a "linguistic journey" that, based on Hoffman's description, we may view as just as great as the physical distance between Poland and Canada. We may be surprised that Eva and her sister were not reduced to tears. Might we view the teacher's actions, decided in consultation with the family's Polish benefactor, as harsh and oppressive by a controlling authoritarian figure? Are the new names given so it is easier for the teacher and the other students to pronounce the anglicised names rather than having to learn new unfamiliar names? Or might we adopt the view that the teacher has the girls' interests at heart and is acting from a basic goodness on which relationships between a teacher and students generally are founded?

If we accept that the new names are meant to assist with the girls' integration, it seems to have had quite the opposite effect, with them feeling alienated from their new identities as well as the rest of the class. We might wonder if the teacher would do the same if she knew how the girls felt. Yet the practice of changing children's names continues. My mother finds that most people in Australia have difficulty pronouncing her first name, Bronisława, so she carefully chose cross-cultural names for my siblings and me to spare us from experiencing the same problem. Recently, I heard about a teacher in Australia who followed a school tradition and organised a

“name changing ceremony” in her Kindergarten class during which the names of the children from other countries or cultural backgrounds were anglicised. It seems that the teacher was aware of the significance of this action by holding a special ceremony but we might wonder whether the school realised the full effect of doing so, or the disregard and disrespect unintentionally shown towards the children’s given names.

Good intentions do not always result in the best actions or outcomes. A Tanzanian folktale about monkeys and fish highlights this. During the rainy season after a river had burst its banks some monkeys climbed to safety and were sitting in the trees watching the events below when they noticed some fish jumping in and out of the water. The monkeys were concerned that the fish did not have any legs and thus could not escape from the rising water, so they decided to rescue them. They started catching the fish when they jumped up out of the water, placing them carefully on the river bank. When the fish lay still on the ground, the monkeys thought they were resting after their exhausting swim and expected them to thank them after they woke up (African proverbs, 1998-2002). It is probably unlikely that Eva and her sister ever thanked the teacher for their name changes but it is interesting that the anglicised version of Eva’s name is printed on the cover of her book *Lost in Translation* (1989) perhaps suggesting that she eventually reconciled herself to her new name.

There are different versions of my name “Helena”, pronounced Hel-en-a, in many languages and people often pronounce it incorrectly in Australia saying “Heleena” or “Helayna” which is something of a frustration to me. In certain countries, I sometimes use the local version of my name. So strongly do I identify with the Greek form of my name because I have many Greek friends and frequently holiday in Greece, that I often introduce myself to Greek people as *Eleni*. I have even turned around in the street when I have heard this name called. At a social event, some years ago, I was surprised when someone I had just met called me *Helka*, a Polish version of my name used only by my family in Australia and Poland. It took my breath away and just like the song *Like a Prayer* by singer-songwriter Madonna, it evoked a warm feeling of familiarity, connectedness and “home”.

Life is a mystery
Everyone must stand alone
I hear you call my name
And it feels like home.

Anna, the protagonist of the book *Whatever Happened to Anna K.* has a similar reaction.

Anna, he began again ... He pronounced her name the same way her parents did, patiently, the same long tender “A” for “Ah-na.” There was no Ehna in the room ... [She] allowed her own name to wash over her, embracing her. (Reyn, 2008, p. 28)

Daniel who was born in South America and lived in the United States, Spain and Hungary responds to, “Catalina, Kathleen, Katerina, Katalin, Kati, Gayarti and Kata” (2011, p. 149). The importance of these name changes cannot be underestimated, as babies are born with a linguistic instinct (Chomsky, 1957, 2005; Pinker 1994; Hinton in della Chiesa et al., 2012). Our parents tenderly pronouncing our names are some of the first sounds that we hear after we are born and represent who we are, contributing to our identity as we journey through life. Cultural connections manifest in names and are perpetuated through the generations, as in the case of Mairie’s granddaughter who was given a traditional Scottish name by her Australian born parents.

Identity involves a process of self-identification as well as identification by others and Mario, Holly and Mairie experience both aspects. Like their name changes, their narratives show their identities are dynamic and constantly changing—influenced by both internal and external factors. Heiss whose father was Austrian and whose mother was an Indigenous Australian explores these themes in her book, *Am I Black Enough For You?* (2012). She describes how she deals with the incongruity between her own self-perception and other people’s perceptions of her identity because her skin colour is fairer than their concept of a stereotypical Indigenous person.

Mario’s Italian identity is a great source of pride to him throughout his life and he engages in constant reflection about his identity, ultimately deciding that he is an “evolving person”. As a child and adolescent growing up in Adelaide he strongly identifies with being Italian and his Italian-ness. He lives in an Italian sphere, most of his friends are of Italian heritage, his school has a high proportion of students with an Italian background, he and his family take part in Italian ethnic community events, and his allegiance to sporting teams is based on ethnic representation. Are these indicators of the way he sees himself in the world? Do they help him to form his self-perception and create his sense of identity?

Does his cultural identification transcend his geographical location within the concepts of lived space and relationality, as he tends to align himself closely with his family background? The physical connection between his country of birth seems to be replaced in Australia by people of similar background helping him to retain his Italian links. It may appear to us that early in his life Mario aligns himself more closely with the local neighbourhood than the wider Adelaide or Australian community. Might we assume that this possibly limits his interaction with non-Italian people and delays his integration into the Australian community, as his narrative suggests a strong sense of self and “the other” or “us and them”?

It is a phase during which he uses disparaging terms to describe Australians and engages in “borderline racism” with chanting at football games. Mario describes himself as an “ignorant Italian” at this stage of his life suggesting that he is not proud of the way he behaved. How much of his behaviour at that time is due to teenage male bravado will never be known but his self-identification with others of similar background seems to play a large part in his developmental years. As the family ties in Italy loosen, his memories of Italy and his family diminish, and as he matures and expands his networks, he becomes more aware of his own attitudes and behaviour and begins to question them. Teachers prompt him to reflect on his identity by questioning his allegiance to sporting teams and his country of residence. Pollock and Van Reken tell us that divided loyalties is a common characteristic of people with cross-cultural childhoods (2009, p. 90) and it becomes a significant issue for Mario that he reflects upon during his life.

It is while he is in middle school, after he has lived in Australia for several years, that Mario appears to experience internal tension between his sense of identity and belonging. He seems to be in a state of “in-between-ness” as he tries to navigate his way between his Italian-ness and Australian-ness, and his intersubjectivity and connectedness with the respective countries and people. He starts questioning “this pretense” and feels uneasy with the contradictions in his life like playing cricket, a popular sport in Australia instead of soccer, the popular football game in Italy. He thinks, “we are not all that we are cracked up to be” and starts to perceive “the ridiculousness of it all”.

Might it be that as he is older and starts to mature, his spatial orientation and sense of relationality alter and he begins to realise that there is more to Adelaide than just his local

community and that he and his suburb are part of the broader Australian community? Are we seeing a change in his view of his lived space and the start of him considering Australia to be his home now? Has he started to realise that he has adopted some Australian ways of thinking and doing? Does it make him think that perhaps he is not truly Italian in his ways? The more Mario leaves his somewhat sheltered Italian life in Adelaide after leaving school and meets new people from an Australian background, the more he begins to question his own identity, highlighting the importance of relationality and intersubjectivity to identity formation.

It is Mario's first visit back to Italy that is one of the greatest influences on his self-perception and identity. He feels like a stranger in his country of birth and does not like some of the attitudes, values and behaviour of people he observes in Italy. We see a shift in his perspective. He becomes critical of the Italian way of doing things that leads him to develop a greater appreciation of Australian values and norms. He starts to view himself to be more Australian and judges that the Australian way of doing things is better than the Italian way. Does this cause him to experience inner turmoil after years of identifying as an Italian? We might wonder if after his return to his Italian enclave his change of self-perception causes him difficulty with his relationships with his friends who still perceive themselves as being Italian. How do his friends relate to his change of attitude? Mario describes himself at this point in his life as an "arrogant Australian". I understand this to mean that he self-identifies as an Australian and is behaving in an arrogant manner rather than stereotyping all Australians as being arrogant.

The narratives of Mario, Holly and Mairie and my own personal experiences reveal elements of cultural responses to personal and cultural identity adding validity to the framework proposed by Pollock and van Reken as an appropriate and useful tool to interpret individual responses to cross-cultural life-world transitions. The PolVan Cultural Identity Model (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, pp. 54-55) identifies four common responses to personal and cultural identity in relation to surrounding culture that we can view in respect to the concept of the lived body and its connection to lived space and lived human relations. To explain briefly, the term 'Foreigner' means to look and think differently, 'Hidden Immigrant' means to look alike but think differently, 'Adopted' is to look different but think alike, and 'Mirror' is to look and think alike. 'Foreigner' is used to describe a person who is unlike most of the people in the host culture because of differences in physical features and appearance, such as clothing. The feeling of difference is reinforced by the 'Foreigner' thinking differently because of different values and

norms. A ‘Hidden Immigrant’ initially is less obvious among others in the host culture because of similar appearance but interaction with others can reveal that person does not think or act like most other people in the host community.

An ‘Adopted’ person is someone who has a different appearance from most people in the host culture but has accepted and internalised the norms and values of the host culture and so comes to think and act like most people in the new environment. A ‘Mirror’ is a person who shares the physical characteristics of people in the host community and thinks and acts like them as well. The different responses illustrate how appearances can lead people to hold inaccurate assumptions about others, especially when outward features mask inner differences that can be problematic and cause misunderstandings.

Being labelled a ‘wog’ at a fast food restaurant after he conceives of himself as an Australian appears to be quite a blow to Mario’s self-perception. Martin and Rizvi write that, “the sense of belonging that may be experienced in some moments is all too easily shattered when the lines of here/there, we/you are violently reasserted in experiences of racism” (2014, p. 1025). This incident provides an example of the effect of corporeality—how our physical bodies are perceived by others. Mario’s Mediterranean features distinguish him from his antagonists yet he sees himself as an Australian, suggesting that he has adopted the Australian way of thinking. This incident, similar to the lived experience of Heiss, highlights the way that identification of people by others based on physical appearance can be at odds with self-identification and cultural assimilation and can foster identity confusion in people with cross-cultural backgrounds. (Heiss, 2012; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). It can also spark anger as Daniel describes a young black woman she meets who is tired of representing “the views of all African Americans” just because of her appearance that challenges the notion that people who look alike tend to think alike (2011, p. 147).

Hinton asserts that singular self-identification has its limitations as, “confirming our identity to a nation can make us feel alienated from aspects of our self” (in della Chiesa et al., 2012, p. 410). If we accept this proposal, is Mario alienating himself from his Australian side when he identifies as being Italian? Is he alienating himself from his Italian side when he identifies as being Australian? What effect does denial of a part of self have on him? Mario’s second visit to

Italy helps him to gain a deeper insight and different perspectives about the Italian people and their way of life. It appears to lead him to understand himself better and to reconcile the different elements of his identity by becoming what he describes as a “balanced Ito-Australian”. Can we view this as coming to terms with different aspects of his being and no longer denying a part of himself?

Might we assume that he feels that he maintains many Italian qualities and adopts Australian ones with the word “balanced”? His choice of words seems to suggest that he thinks these qualities are compatible and complement each other. It reflects his individual subjectivity that influences the concept of his personal identity and his intersubjectivity based on his relationships and interactions with others within the theme of lived human relations (Litowitz, 2014, p. 309). Perhaps he has reconciled aspects of himself that had been alienated when he singularly identified as being Italian or Australian. Can we consider his dual citizenship of Italy and Australia as an official recognition of a balanced view of his identity?

Historicity (Küle, 2006; Lucas, 2014; Pizarroso, 2013; Stewart, 2016) from an anthropological perspective is viewed as a cultural perception and relational knowledge of the past within the theme of temporality. Peter Lucas seems to support this view stating, “Just as in a melody each note is inflected by those that preceded it and those that are anticipated, so human existence as thrown projection is inflected at every moment by a specific past and at least one possible future” (2014, p. 233). This perspective stands in contrast to the view commonly held by historians of historicity as verifiable facts (Stewart, 2016, p. 79). Reinhart Koselleck (in Stewart, 2016, p. 80) describes historicity as a characteristic of all people that is consistent with the concept of “historically effected consciousness” developed by Gadamer and discussed by Charles Stewart, (2016, p. 80) and Dostal (2002, p. 92), which claims that historical events and relationships influence a person’s thinking and actions. Stewart writes, “Historicity asks what is the relationship to the past that individuals establish, given their present position (and intimation of the future) and the models available to them” (2016, p. 80).

Historicity and cultural heritage appear to contribute to Mario’s reflections on his Italian lineage. He shows great pride in Italy and the achievements of the Italian people. His awareness of his historicity makes him proud to be descended from a significant nation of people. He is

appalled by overt displays of crass Italian-ness as he believes that this does not reflect the dignity and essence of the Italian people. He feels a strong obligation to maintain the legacy of his lineage by behaving in a way that will not disrespect or tarnish the image of his heritage and country of birth. It appears his relationality affects the way he chooses to live his life. Might we view this as an internal code of ethics that guides all his decisions and actions during his adult life and leads him to maintain high standards in his personal and professional life?

Mario sees his Italian-ness as a source of uniqueness in the world while recognising that there are 65 million people in Italy and a significant number of expatriate Italians living in Australia. We may ask if the search for uniqueness is one of the motivating factors for migrants and the children of migrants to retain their cultural identity as a way of setting themselves apart from others within the community. Might it afford them a sense of individuality or difference within a world of mass culture that is promoted by the media? In her essay, “Explorations of Exile, Bilingualism and Identity in the Autobiographical Works of Nancy Huston and Eva Hoffman”, Kathrin Leimig writes that Hoffman,

even thrives on the pleasures of being different and special, asserting she ‘has now gained the status of an exotic stranger, and this brings high color to [her] cheeks and sharpens [her] opinions. [She is] excited by [her] own otherness, which surrounds [her] like a bright, somewhat inflated bubble. (2017, p. 11)

The central fictional character Anna in *What Happened to Anna K.* similarly embraces her differences.

Eventually all those details would become useful, the negative charge of her identity neutralized and switched to its opposite. In college, and beyond, her Russianness would be an asset, the signifier that would set her apart from others, that would lend her a distinguished glow. (Reyn, 2008, p. 46)

David Pearson explores the concept of mass media in American society and considers whether it promotes homogeneity acting as, “a cultural furnace into which social elements are shovelled to become fused, alloyed”, (1993, p. 17) or heterogeneity by expanding opportunities for different thinking and behaviours. He suggests that in the post-mass culture, the media has adopted a strategy that promotes both, using a strategy of “standardized diversity” that results in

individuated lifestyle. Mario seems to have exemplified this in his unique blend of Australian and Italian culture in his home environment.

We can begin to see through the life narratives of this inquiry and other life stories that the history of a group of people with whom there is a link can affect a person's self-identification. Mario is very proud of the Italian people because of their achievements. Ingrid who emigrated from Germany identifies herself as an Australian. She says she does not want to be known as being German because she is ashamed of Germany's actions during World War II. Ingrid has little attachment to Germany and has lost connection with the few family members who still live there and the loss of relationality with family members seems to distance her further from her country of birth. Such is her detachment from the country that she surprises herself when she marries a man who was born in Germany. On the other hand, Holly's friend Lara who was born in Germany and has lived in Zimbabwe, Uganda and Australia strongly identifies with being German and speaks proudly of her cultural heritage. She does not seem to hold any negative feelings towards her country of birth. World War II ended more than 50 years before she was born and within the theme of temporality she is more distanced in time and appears detached from the events of the war.

The Executive Summary in the book *Languages in a Better World – Learning for better Cultural Understanding* edited by della Chiesa et al. (2012) states that, "People often express a perceived change in their identities as a result of experiences with other languages and cultures" (p. 26). My conversations with Holly reveal that she has consciously engaged in the process of self-identification and speaks about herself in a way that supports this view. She reflects on how she has changed after each lived experience and feels that it changes her identity. She seems to be in a constant process of self-construction and self-identification with each move to a new country. It results in the creation of several dimensions to her sense of identity that appear to compartmentalise yet complement one another.

Todres in his exposition of Sigmund Freud's work tells us that, "we can compartmentalise ourselves in ways that can be both helpful and problematic" (2007, p. 66). He alerts us that if we maintain a narrow view of ourselves it, "restricts our capacities for intimacy and work". He calls this "stuckness" yet at different stages of development it can be "necessary and healthy" (p. 66).

Holly's narrative suggests that in her case, the compartmentalisation of her identity enables her to deal with her new circumstances consistent with Freud's writings on sublimation and repression that can play, "a constructive role in achieving an organised self that can flexibly de-emphasise certain desires in order to resolve inner conflict and achievable forms of functioning" (p. 66).

We may be surprised by the different appellations that Holly gives herself when she is telling her story, as though she is speaking about other people with their own individual qualities. She seems to objectify each of the identities that she develops and that constitute the person that she has become. As she reflects on her experiences living in different cultures Holly realises that it has been a process of self-discovery. Todres suggests that the search for identity involves "ongoing self-definition in changing circumstances" as we search for wholeness that already exists within us (2011, p. 130). He writes,

The wholeness at the source of human identity is, however, always already there, obscured by the relentlessness of the quest to become something in particular. Tragically, we seek wholeness somewhere else, in the particularity of objectifying self and other. (2011, p. 132)

He says that in fact, letting go of objectifying self or other results in essential nothingness that can lead to wholeness or fullness based on Heidegger's concept of "*Gelassenheit* or 'letting-be-ness'" (p. 131). "Korean Holly" is the first of Holly's personas since South Korea is where she is born and spends the first part of her life. Holly does not seem to have much difficulty fitting into her new environment in India. She respects and adopts different behaviours, aided by her willingness to accept different beliefs, traditions and customs of the Indian culture and host community.

She acknowledges that she changes in India and realises the effect it has upon her by describing herself at that time as "Indian Holly". The significance of these changes is highlighted when she says that she will always stop to light a candle at a Hindu temple wherever she sees one in the world, suggesting that the changes are permanent, acknowledging the themes of temporality and spatiality. The creation of "Indian Holly" seems to be a developmental process through exposure to different cultural norms and practices through which she gains a greater understanding of different cultures and the world. The creation of "Australian Holly" appears to

be a somewhat painful transformation. She purposefully changes her identity to be accepted. It involves her rejection and denial of characteristics and behaviours that previously identify her as “Korean Holly”. Pertti Alasuutari discusses the concept of self-construction as part of identity formation in a way that sheds further light on Holly’s decision to become less Korean through adaptation and self-renewal due to her new environment and changing circumstances as he writes,

to realize that selves are, after all, constructions we live by enables us, when that is needed, to renew ourselves. It allows us to adopt a view of life and self that better adapts to changed conditions or which, because the conception of oneself is changed, changes the conditions by viewing them in a new light. (1997, p. 16)

Holly’s desire to be accepted is so great when she first arrives in Australia that she cuts ties with people in South Korea and discards elements of Korean culture while working to improve her English language skills. She questions herself as to whether she is doing the right thing at the time but her adolescent desire for relationality, to fit in and make friends, is so great that she convinces herself that she needs to conform and be like everyone else. This helps dispel any doubts in her mind about her actions. Loss is a common theme of the cross-cultural experience but not often as intentional or deliberate as Holly’s self-dialogue indicates when she decides to cast off elements of herself and the Korean culture. Daniel supports the view that change and renewal, and the desire for conformity are means of supporting identity formation saying,

Being processed and reprocessed, stretching to fill family, professional or cultural expectations, regressing the past, or cutting off an unsupported potential is how culture conditions us to play designated roles. It equips us with a roadmap and an identity. (2012, p. 151)

By the time Holly graduates from high school, her perspective has changed and she becomes concerned about a loss of self that she begins to sense. It appears she feels a sense of disconnection and alienation from her country of birth and is worried that her changing identity will affect her ability to repatriate into the South Korean community. While she is sad at losing a part of herself, she considers it to be a necessary part of “absorbing other cultures” and decides that she has gained more than she has lost. Todres sees this a path to wholeness as he writes, “There is a nourishment to a rhythm of self-finding and self-losing in which both movements can be mutually supportive” (2011, p. 131).

The practice of identification of people by others in the form of stereotyping disturbs Holly from an early age. She provides two examples to demonstrate how people categorise and identify others, by those within the same culture, as well as those from different cultures. Like Mario whose loyalties and self-identification are questioned by some teachers, Holly is questioned about her Korean-ness by another Korean girl. Holly's friend tells her that she does not appear to be "Korean Korean" anymore implying that she has changed and is no longer behaving as someone who has always lived in South Korea and is a "true" Korean. Her friend seems to be questioning the authenticity of her identity and her loyalty to South Korea. The term she chooses to describe Holly implies that her friend considers there are degrees of being Korean and that Holly's Korean-ness has become "diluted" after exposure to other cultures. Ironically, Holly is attracted to study in India because she sees it as a pure culture that is little influenced by other cultures, particularly Western culture.

Huston explores the issue of authenticity in her writing. Leimig in her elucidation of Huston's work tells us, "At the centre of this persistent re-evaluation of her subjectivity lies a deep-seated concern both for feeling authentically herself, and for being perceived by others as an authentic subject" (2018, p. 2). She goes on to explain the difference between Huston's notion of "authentic" and "acquired" French-ness and the "hierarchisation of Frenchness, and the fact that in France, some are considered more French than others." Huston maintains that a French childhood underpins what can be considered an authentic French-ness like her children who were born in France (p. 8). On the other hand, Lucas tells us,

Authenticity cannot be either as a matter of self-discovery or sheer self-creation ...
[It] could be conceived as a *means* between the two vices of regarding oneself as essentially an object to be discovered and regarding oneself to be free to be whatever one chooses to be. (2014, p. 234)

Holly and Mario's narratives suggest that they are caught between these vices. It is a similar situation that I experience when some of my Australian friends view my Polish self-identification as disloyalty to Australia and a personal insult to them. A particularly unpleasant response that I received once was, "If you love Poland so much, why don't you go back there?" This hurtful and insensitive comment reflects the lack of understanding that many people might have about the effect of a cross-cultural childhood on identity formation.

Drops of Jupiter (Tell Me), Train



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Xf-Lesrkuc&sns=em>

Now that she's back in the atmosphere
With drops of Jupiter in her hair, hey, hey
She acts like summer and walks like rain
Reminds me that there's time to change, hey, hey
Since the return of her stay on the moon
She listens like spring and she talks like June, ...

But tell me did you sail across the sun
Did you make it to the Milky Way to see the lights all faded
And that heaven is overrated?
Tell me, did you fall from a shooting star
One without a permanent scar
And did you miss me while you were looking for yourself out there?

Now that she's back from that soul vacation
Tracing her way through the constellation, hey, hey
She checks out Mozart while she does tae-bo
Reminds me that there's room to grow, ...
But tell me did the wind sweep you off your feet
Did you finally get the chance to dance along the light of day
And head back to the milky way
And tell me, did Venus blow your mind
Was it everything you wanted to find

And did you miss me while you were looking for yourself out there ...

And did you finally get the chance to dance along the light of day?
And did you fall from a shooting star, fall from a shooting star?
And are you lonely looking for yourself out there?

The relevance of this song to this thesis is its reference to finding oneself that we can interpret as trying to determine our identity. *Drops of Jupiter* was written in 1999 by lead singer of the band Train, Pat Monahan. The song was inspired by the death of his mother the previous year and was created as a way of exploring what happens to the human spirit after passing from this world. Monahan seems to be comforted by the thought that his mother continues to exist in some form within our wider universe with the words, “Now that she’s back in the atmosphere with drops of Jupiter in her hair”.

The central theme of the song is transformation and our narrative inquiry reveals that a cross-cultural childhood can involve transformation in a physical and personal sense and “that there is room to grow”, which Holly appears to embrace. The imagery and juxtaposition of concepts and images in the lyrics, “She acts like summer and walks like rain ... She listens like spring and she talks like June” remind us that experiencing a cross-cultural childhood can have a significant effect on us and, like the Notre Dame Cathedral of Chartres, it can result in contrasting elements that create the whole person. The words, “did you miss me” and “are you lonely looking for yourself out there” portray that the search for self can be a solitary journey and we can feel isolated and lonely as we try to determine who we are and where we belong.

Holly experiences positive discrimination, which she finds amusing at the time but she strongly rejects. It leads Holly to explore these themes and relationships between different people in the animated films that she begins making as an independent filmmaker. She uses her creativity as an outlet for her frustration and a means of educating others, reflecting the life-changing effect of her cross-cultural childhood.

The questioning of Holly’s identity by another Korean student and her friend’s forgetfulness of her Asian appearance depicts how much she has adapted her behaviour and adopted Australian ways of thinking and behaving that seem to reflect her transformation. If we paraphrase the lyrics of the song *Drops of Jupiter*, does Holly now act like an Australian and walk

like an Indian? Does she listen like a Korean and talk like an Asian? We can consider that she has largely been accepted and successful in transforming herself into “Australian Holly”. The question remains whether Holly would have made just as many friends and been accepted eventually without having to disguise her Korean-ness. Ultimately, Holly appears to reconcile the different sides of herself. She realises that each experience contributes to her unique identity and uses the term “Multicultural Holly” to encompass all the cultures that she has internalised. It appears that Holly finally has worked through the issues of self-construction and self-identification and finally is happy being “Just Holly”. Her choice of moniker implies a sense of self-acceptance without the need to identify with a single culture. She is thrilled when others seek her friendship and support just because of who she is, although we can consider that she may have become a very different person without her cross-cultural experiences.

The question of identity is a significant issue for Mairie as well. Like Mario and Holly, after her emigration to Australia she experiences difficulty with transition and it becomes a source of much self-reflection during her life. On arrival in Australia, she perceives, and is perceived by others, to be different highlighting the importance of corporeality and how the lived body is perceived by others. For the first time in her life she has to explain herself to others, reinforcing her feeling of being apart from others and causing her to reflect on things that she has taken for granted and done all her life. The sense of being different is so intense that she wants to return to Scotland and the familiarity of her home and life there—where she feels a sense of security and belonging. If Mairie had been successful in her plan to return to Scotland as a teenager might she have found, as the lyrics of the song suggest, “The lights all faded and that heaven is overrated”?

The difference in Mairie’s appearance and behaviour, like Holly’s, can be compared to that of a ‘Foreigner’, someone who looks and thinks differently from the people around her. In Scotland, a ‘Foreigner’ is pronounced “furriner” and is used to describe people who come from a different part of the world, and this aptly describes Mairie in Tasmania. It seems from Mairie’s description of her early school days in Australia that her peers perceive her as a “furriner”. It signifies how ignorance and lack of understanding can lead to discrimination and prejudice. We can imagine it is a painful and difficult time for Mairie.

Her identity in Port Seton is not just steeped in the Scottish culture but also strongly linked to her extensive family network left behind and her personal qualities and achievements as an individual. She has to re-establish herself and her identity in her new environment. Crisp says that, “Belonging is associated with a subjective notion of identity and connectedness relates to participation in societal organisations or social networks” (2010, p. 124). She goes on to say that, “It is unclear whether it is the number of connections or the strength of the connections that one has, that results in a sense of belonging” (p. 126). Màirìe’s success in her studies is recognised as a valued achievement and helps with her acceptance that we may view as her getting the chance “to finally dance along the light of day”. She makes conscious efforts, like a cultural chameleon, to change the way that she speaks to adopt an Australian accent with the same goal of conforming with those around her as Holly tries to do at her school in Australia. Liang describes this as having to navigate “social minefields” (in Bell-Villada et al., 2011, p. 444).

Over time Màirìe feels that she develops her own identity in Australia but she never changes her view about who she is stating, “I am still Scottish”. She associates it with her value system and is proud to be affiliated with the Scottish people reflecting the effect of her historicity and her pride in her Scottish lineage, just as Mario feels about his Italian lineage. Although she is proud of her cultural heritage, she feels that her identity limits her professional opportunities because she refuses to compromise the values that she has been brought up with in Scotland, reflecting how deeply her Scottish ways of thinking and doing are ingrained in her.

Geert Hofstede suggests that our identities are based on stereotypes and that they are fluid, based on our intersubjectivity as he writes,

Identities consist of people’s answers to the question: Where do I belong? They are based on mutual images and stereotypes and on emotions linked to the outer layers of the onion, not to values ... At home, I feel Dutch and very different from other Europeans, such as Belgians and Germans; in Asia or the United States, we all feel like Europeans. (Hofstede, 2010 in Spencer-Oatey, 2012, p. 10)

We have seen that each person in this narrative inquiry explores and attempts to define their subjective identity throughout the course of their lives. Todres explains that the focus on our self-perceptions and identity is linked to our historicity as, “We are deeply confused by our

historical pain, separation and threat, in which an incomplete situation is felt to be an incomplete self. 'Thus the search for an objectified self begins' (2011, p. 132). Holly's compartmentalisation of her different identities based on her affiliation with the different countries in which she has lived, and Mario's constant ruminations about his identity based on his strong sense of historicity seen by his strong pride in his Italian lineage and his confusion about his identity because of his separation from his country of birth mirror the statement by Todres. He suggests there is a tension between wholeness and self-assertion that includes a process of self-finding and self-losing and involves "ego-strength" and "ego-less". Ego-strength is a person's ability to accept historical incompleteness and the vulnerability of being human beings coupled with a sense of completeness "to the unspecialised openness of being there" (p. 134).

So it is that sometimes people become defensive about their own cultural practices or reverse their orientation and become overly critical of their own cultural norms. Ann Straub defines intercultural competence as, "the capability to accurately understand and adapt behavior to cultural difference and commonality" (2016, p. 3). She states that it is considered to be an essential 21st Century skill with the need for people to move beyond the monocultural world orientation and minimisation of cultural differences to recognising patterns of cultural differences and developing the ability to shift cultural perspectives and behaviours to be able to function authentically in different cultural environments and to promote a more peaceful world. As we conclude our exposition of the concept of identity that perhaps we can regard as the song suggests, "a soul vacation, Tracing her [our] way through the constellation", we proceed in the next section to consider the importance and effect of culture within the lived experience of a cross-cultural childhood.

Holding onto the past: The cultural anchor

Culture is frequently referenced in all three narratives in this inquiry. What do we mean though by the term 'culture'? To find a definition of culture is problematic with 164 definitions identified as long ago as 1952 by anthropologists Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn (in Spencer-Oatey, 2012, p. 1; Sherry, 1986, p. 573). One of my favourite definitions, because it

beautifully encapsulates the richness of human life is by Davis in his book *The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World* and supports the concept of culture as a dynamic man-made entity.

Culture is the product of our dreams, the embodiment of our hopes, the symbol of all that we are and all that we, as an inquisitive and astonishingly adaptive species, have created. The full measure of a culture embraces both the actions of a people and the quality of their aspirations, the nature of the metaphors that propel their lives. (2009, p. 19)

Helen Spencer-Oatey (2012, p. 3) in her study of some of the multiple definitions of culture identifies three ways that culture manifests itself. These include observable artefacts, values, and basic underlying assumptions. Hofstede states that, “although certain aspects of culture are physically visible, “their cultural meaning ... lies precisely and only in the way these practices are interpreted by the insiders” (1991, p. 8 in Spencer Oatey, 2011, p. 4). Does this mean that those of us who do not have embodied understanding of a culture do not fully understand the cultural norms that may have the potential to affect our relationality?

Having earlier considered our deep longing to belong and be accepted, can we view Holly and Mairie’s efforts to adapt and fit in to be a process of trial and error as they learn and unlearn new ways of thinking and doing? Hoffman describes the difficulty she experiences navigating unfamiliar teenage norms in Canada (1989, pp. 116-119). She says she is unsure how to behave because she lacks knowledge of the socially accepted behaviours of her Canadian peer group, similar to Mairie during her teenage years in Australia. She reveals to us the extent of the difficulty of moving between cultures by writing, “You can’t transport human meanings whole from one culture to another any more than you can transliterate a text” (1989, p. 175). Pollock and Van Reken tell us that traditions are “how cultural beliefs are worked out in practice” (2009, p. 44). We can see the connection between temporality and tradition in the comment by the fictional character Teyve in the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*,

Because of our traditions we’ve kept our balance for many, many years. Here in Anatevka we have traditions for everything—how to eat, how to sleep, how to wear clothes ... You may ask, how did this tradition start? I’ll tell you—I don’t know! But it’s a tradition ... Without our traditions, our lives would be as shaky as—a fiddler on the roof! (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 45)

Using touching imagery, Hoffman provides insight into just how difficult understanding cultural norms or traditions can be—even leading to disorientation—when she reflects, “just when I’ve gotten myself where I supposedly want to be, I feel as disoriented as a homing pigeon that has been blindfolded and turned around too many times, and doesn’t know the direction of home” (1989, p. 201).

Mario’s narrative reveals to us that it is very important to him to maintain the observable or surface elements of Italian culture including language and traditions. We see his family try to replicate some of their customs in Adelaide. Might we see this as an example of the notion of “cultural maintenance” proposed by Marshall Segall, Pierre Dasen, John Berry and Ype Poortinga that is people’s desire to keep their culture alive in their new environment (1999, p. 305)? Not all these efforts are successful because of the difficulty in transposing traditions and customs into a different context. We see disorientation on many fronts for Mario too.

It was the same with my family waiting for the evening star before eating our Christmas Eve dinner on *Wigilia*. It still feels inappropriate to me to break tradition by eating dinner on Christmas Eve before the first star appears. Is this a reflection of the extent to which cultural attitudes and values can be ingrained in us? Whether it is or not, the feeling runs deep. Perhaps this is what Hoffman speaks of when she describes culture as, “that weird artifice I’m imprisoned in” (1989, p. 203).

Polish traditions always have been important to me so it felt even more inappropriate when some of my family members decided to go away for the holidays or out with friends, reflecting their adoption of some Australian traditions rather than celebrating together. On those occasions, in trying to preserve the Polish tradition and somewhat disillusioned, my mother and I would go together to *Dom Polski*, the ethnic Polish Club in Adelaide, where we could recreate the celebration and sense of family with other expatriates. One of my long-held dreams is to celebrate an authentic Polish Christmas in Poland. Crisp seems to capture my feelings and emphasises the importance of retaining cultural links for identity formation and feelings of belonging when she writes,

Migration, whether chosen or forced, creates considerable potential for disconnection with one's past ... For those for whom where they come from is fundamental to their sense of identity, maintaining cultural links, can reinforce a sense of belonging. (2010, p. 126)

My participation in Polish cultural events with members of the expatriate community helps to reinforce my sense of identity and preserve my connectedness with my cultural heritage and people who share the same cultural background that Mario presumably experiences with his Italian expatriate community. It is the same connection that I feel when I meet Polish people while travelling. There is an immediate kinship similar to that of the Chinese student studying in Melbourne, who we read about earlier, who was regarded almost as a relative by Chinese tourists because she was from China. On one occasion, the kinship feeling was so strong with a Polish woman whom I met in Thailand that she gave me some traditional Polish biscuits to take home to my mother.

With each generation, the cultural links seem to weaken, as with my nephew who does not speak Polish. He is proud of his Polish heritage and has made his own pilgrimage to Poland to connect with his cultural roots and family but retaining Polish traditions is not important to him. His grandmother left Poland 74 years ago and his attachment is not as strong as the first-generation members of our family born in Australia. Is it because his link with Poland is more distant in time, reflecting the temporality and spatiality of cultural traditions? Mario says that he will let his children decide for themselves if they want to travel to Italy, learn Italian or follow Italian customs. The custom of breaking the wafer, *opłatek* before dinner on Christmas Eve is an important tradition that is valued by my whole family, including my husband who was born in England. He has adopted the tradition to the extent that he is the person who reminds me to place the wafer on the table lest I forget in my haste to prepare the meal. It makes me feel that my traditions and I are valued and respected because he knows how much this means to me. He now has adopted this tradition as part of his own cultural repertoire, highlighting how personal connections can be life changing and affect our actions.

Mario and his family cling to traditional Italian ways like my family and he attends Italian Mass with his mother at Christmas. Often a religious building such as a church, mosque or temple reflects the ethnic majority in the neighbourhood. This allows new migrants and people with a cross-cultural background to engage in traditional religious worship. Is it the opportunity

to engage in traditional worship that draws people together? Or is it the opportunity to meet with people who share a common cultural background and language as part of an ethnic community network? Perhaps it is for both religious and social reasons but it is difficult to know which of the two is of greater importance to individuals. In the newspaper article “Losing My Religion”, Matt Smith quotes sociology lecturer and researcher David Radford from the University of South Australia who supports the view that religious affiliation assists with migrant assimilation, “It is about belonging as much as anything else ... It makes absolute sense. It is about community as well as religion” (2017).

Definitions of culture generally include references to beliefs and values (Tyler, 1870; Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952; Matsumot, 1996 in Spencer-Oatey, 2012, p. 2), while Hofstede describes culture as, “the collective programming of the mind” (1986, p. 302). He suggests that the acquisition of culture is learned or acquired through membership of groups, distinct from personality and human nature. He describes personality as a personal set of programmes specific to an individual, and human nature as universal mental software shared by us all. In Hofstede’s model of uniqueness in human mental programming, culture sits between personality that is inherited and learned, and human nature that only is inherited (Hofstede, 1994, p. 6 in Spencer-Oatey, 2012, p. 4). If we accept that culture is learned, by the nature of its acquisition, it is dependent on relationality as it is a shared activity that involves other people as we interact with others in our longing for belonging and connectedness.

Applying Hofstede’s model of uniqueness in human mental programming to the narratives of Mario, Holly and Mairie, we can see they display elements of human nature such as the ability to feel fundamental emotions like love, joy, anxiety, fear, frustration, and anger, yet these emotions look like they are influenced by their cultural traditions as well as their personalities. But to what degree, may we ask, do each of these aspects affect each individual? What are the driving forces that elicit their specific responses to their lived cross-cultural experiences? Pollock and Van Reken (2009) present many accounts of individuals’ reflections about their cross-cultural experiences with no two accounts being exactly alike. Even siblings who share the same experience do not necessarily respond in the same way. Might this lead us to consider personality—the aspect of ourselves that is as unique as our fingerprints—impresses our response to a cross-cultural childhood, mixing together a cocktail of human mental

programming with different quantities and qualities of personality, culture and human nature in each person?

Karen Raiserger lists three dimensions of culture described by Zygmunt Bauman in his book *Culture as Praxis* (1973) that align with Hofstede's model—hierarchical, differential and generic concepts of culture (2006, p. 32). Hierarchical culture is described as what an individual “has” or “does not have”. Differential culture relates to specific groups of people, while generic culture is common to us all. Hinton suggests that the process of acquiring culture begins early as, “Babies live in a sea of cultural understandings that have accumulated over many years as they learn” (in della Chiesa et al., 2012, p. 411).

Segall et al. (1999) describe this as “cultural transmission”, a process of enculturation whereby we maintain our culture by sharing our values, beliefs, traditions and artefacts within our own culture (p. 299). On the other hand, Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton and Melville Herskovits (1936) describe something that takes place outside of our culture as acculturation writing that,

Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups. (in Segall et al., 1999, p. 301)

We see that Mario's life within the Italian enclave fosters his Italian-ness at a collective and individual level. He participates in activities with other members of the local Italian community where he consciously and unconsciously adopts Italian ways of thinking and doing. At the same time, he seems to adapt to the Australian community by adopting Australian ways of thinking and doing. Hoffman sheds light on how substantial the effects of immersion in a new culture can be when she notes, “I'm becoming a strange kind of creature I never meant to turn into” (1989, p. 78). It seems Mario is immersing himself in Australian culture while remembering and attempting to be faithful to his Italian essence. Holly and Mairie have little contact with other people from their home countries. We see they learn new ways of thinking and doing on their own and, at times, this is challenging for them.

Segall et al. (1999, pp. 305-308) and John Berry (1997 in Choi, 2016, p. 1380) identify several strategies of acculturation ranging from assimilation, integration, separation to marginalisation that they propose can result in different outcomes. Assimilation involves “culture shedding” and adapting to the host culture. Integration generally is considered to be the most adaptive strategy and involves maintaining “cultural integrity” while participating in the broader community. We may ask why do people from different cultural backgrounds use or need such strategies to adapt to a new environment? Is it because we live in an era of rising nationalism where there is a corresponding lack of cultural responsiveness or receptivity? Is this lack of cultural respect borne of populism and the politics of fear, division and hate that seems to be becoming more prevalent around the world? This, in turn, raises the question of whether it is indeed possible for groups of people from different backgrounds to live in harmony while retaining their cultural links. Why is it that minority groups often feel pressure to adapt to the mainstream culture? What is it that prevents some people from accepting difference and learning to co-exist together in a mutually respectful relationship?

In history we see many examples of tension and conflict between people from different cultural backgrounds ranging from Biblical times to modern times, and in today’s world in places like Syria and Myanmar. Segall et al. (1999) suggest harmonious co-existence requires, “mutual accommodation ... involving the acceptance by both groups of the right of all groups, to live as culturally different peoples” (pp. 306-307). Holly’s openness to different cultures seems to lead her to develop respect for other cultures and an appreciation of the beauty of cultures. She gives the impression that she values mutuality in relationships and views cultural acceptance as a two-way process. Her view is echoed in this statement by an Indigenous Australian Aboriginal elder of the Ngarinyin clan, as he laments the lack of cultural mutuality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures,

We have a Gift we bin trying to give you, but you blocked from hearing us.
(Mowaljarlai in Bell, 2017, para. 11)

Considering our need for relationality, can we regard separation and marginalisation as less positive strategies? Does a person’s reluctance to give up her original culture or rejection by people from the host culture create the potential for exclusion and discrimination? Segall et al. (1999) propose that our responses are personal choices as, “individuals explore different

strategies, eventually settling on one that is more useful and satisfying than others” (p. 308). In an effort to understand the reasons why people respond differently in cross-cultural situations, Julia Middleton in her book *CQ: The Competitive Edge for Leaders Crossing Borders* proposes an interesting metaphor of Core and Flex. She describes Core as,

the things that define you ... These are the things that won't change (or won't change easily). Their solidity is your strength. In your 'Flex' are things that will change. Things that will adapt to circumstances, or to other people or other cultures. (2014, p. 51)

She proposes that it is in our Core that we find, “cultural stuckness, cultural ignorance and cultural intolerance” (2014, p. 57), while a strong Flex allows a person to be flexible and adaptable. She suggests that all people possess these qualities in different combinations. Middleton's metaphor may be helpful in understanding Mario's father's aversion to learning English or associating with other Italian expatriates, leaving him disconnected from most people in Australia, both within his own culture and the host culture. If we accept the metaphor of Core and Flex, might we assume that his Core is stronger than his Flex? If we prefer to apply Hofstede's model of uniqueness in human mental programming, perhaps it is due to his personality. Mario says that his father experiences problems fitting in anywhere. Whatever the reason, Mario is convinced his father endures a great deal of unhappiness in Australia.

Perhaps his constant yearning to be back in Italy is a much stronger pull than the ways he can be himself in Australia and this may contribute to his unhappiness. Or is he like the fictional character, the fiddler Teyve who loses his “cultural balance” because he no longer has an understanding of his changing world, and becomes disoriented and alienated from those around him (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 45). Taylor tells us that lack of awareness of cultural norms can lead to,

an 'identity crisis,' an acute form of disorientation... [if we] lack a frame or horizon within which things can take on a stable significance, within which some life possibilities can be seen as good or meaningful, others as bad or trivial. The meaning of all these possibilities is unfixed, labile or undetermined. This is a painful and frightening experience. (1989, pp. 27-28)

Perhaps this is the way that Mario's father felt in Australia because he lost his frame of reference and cultural balance. We may ask to what extent Mario and Mairie experienced loss of cultural balance when they arrived in Australia and Holly when she arrived in India and Australia, and

how much it contributed to their response when they arrived in their new locations. Segall et al. (1999) advise that if,

changes in the cultural context exceed the individual's capacity to cope because of the magnitude, speed or some other aspect of the change [it can lead] to serious psychological disturbances such as clinical depression, and incapacitating anxiety. (p. 309)

Holly displays a great interest in culture and loves learning about different cultural traditions and customs. Hinton describes people who display these qualities as cosmopolitans and asserts that, "Cosmopolitans are curious about other cultures and learn from a diversity of customs, conventions, and philosophies" (in della Chiesa et al., 2012, p. 146). Holly conveys to us that she believes all cultures are unique and, unlike her friends, she does not view all Asian or Western cultures as being the same. She seems to be aware of the processes that sway the ways she thinks and acts as she talks about becoming "Americanised" through the media while living in South Korea. Is she beginning to recognise without perhaps consciously realising it, that cultures are not static and change and evolve over time due to internal and external pressures, like Mario, who seems to be aware of this when he describes his Italian enclave as "old fashioned Italy".

Davis (2009) and John Sherry (1986) agree that while we are shaped by the culture of our community with which we engage, we are instrumental in changing our community's culture over time. Sherry describes Raymond Williams' scheme of the development of culture as consisting of three interrelated stages—archaic culture that connects people to patterns of the past, residual culture that includes current patterns of daily life that originated in the past, and emergent culture that transforms archaic and residual cultural patterns (1986, p. 574). Tim Edensor in his book *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* supports the view of cultural change and discusses how traditional cultural norms are, "increasingly replaced in their affective power, by meanings, images and activities drawn from popular culture" (2002, p. 12). We see that technology widens the sphere from which these influences are drawn through interconnectedness of people that extends beyond geographical boundaries. It is perhaps not surprising that Mario and his mother, on their return to Italy, feel like strangers.

Holly provides an example of what might be considered “culture shedding” by eliminating aspects of her Korean-ness in Australia and “culture learning” as she adapts to her environment by adopting new ways of thinking and doing that help her to feel a sense of connectedness and belonging (Segall et al., 1999, p. 315). She shows patience and willingness to change or modify her actions just like Hoffman, who writes, “I coo and murmur ingratiatingly; I’m beginning to master the trick of saying thank you with just the right turn of head, just the right balance, between modesty and obsequious” (1989, p. 103).

Personal factors may affect our response to a cross-cultural experience. Segall et al. (1999) tell us that the way a person responds to the acculturation process depends on situational and personal variables such as gender, education, economic status, and distance between cultures (p. 317). Mairie and Holly’s accounts of their transition to Australia within the theme of temporality suggest their age at the time of migration is a significant factor. Holly’s personality and personal qualities of determination and resilience seem to have played a large part in her integration into the Indian and Australian cultures. It may appear to us that Holly is adopting an assimilation strategy as she learns new ways of thinking and doing when she sheds elements of her “Korean-ness” in an effort to fit in. Not only do we see her adapt her behaviour as part of her acculturation but she shares her new knowledge and understandings of other cultures by introducing new traditions like Christmas celebrations to her family in South Korea.

We can see that Mario and Holly’s acculturation into Australia affects their relationality with their extended families in their countries of birth. Mario realises on his visits to Italy that he is different from his relatives and feels like a stranger among them. This may be partly due to changes that Mario experiences as well as Mario’s family getting on with their lives without him. Holly’s parents notice the changes in her. They see she has adopted Australian ways of thinking and doing, and question where their daughter has gone. She finds that she needs to try to explain herself to her family and friends in South Korea without much success and is anxious about returning to live there. Is this what can lead those of us who have emigrated to feel like outsiders in our own countries of birth? Is this what Holly fears will happen on her repatriation? We might wonder what kind of emotions it arouses once she re-enters her Korean world. Does the anxiety continue? Does she experience feelings of fear, frustration, anger, loss or disconnectedness? Do these feelings subside or diminish over time? Do they remain with her and consciously or

unconsciously affect the way she acts and thinks about herself? Or is she relieved because the re-entry is smoother than she anticipates?

As an adult Mario consciously adopts his own strategy to reconcile the different aspects of his life. He creates what we might consider to be his own cultural oasis by integrating elements of his Italian heritage and Australian culture. He enjoys his own unique world that includes elements from both cultures into his home and family life. This seems to reflect Segall et al.'s view,

That in more private spheres or domains (such as the home, the extended family, the ethnic community) more cultural maintenance may be sought than in more public spheres (such as the workplace, or in politics), and that there may be less intergroup contact sought in private spheres than in the public ones. (1999, p. 308)

Mario believes it gives his life a richness that he would not have without his cross-cultural experiences and gives the impression that it provides him with a cultural foundation that supports his sense of subjective self. We see that he does not impose his culture or cultural attitudes on his children although we may wonder what effect living in the home environment in a predominantly Italian neighbourhood has on their acculturation into the Italian culture. The extent of the effect would be difficult to gauge by Mario or his children.

Màirie feels that she has lost elements of her cultural heritage through her migration to Australia. We see from her narrative that she feels a great sense of loss and that it is a source of unresolved grief. Does she share Hoffman's view, "It is my fear that I have to yield too much of my own ground that fills me with such a passionate energy of rage" (1989, p. 205)? She modifies some of her behaviours, like taking up Scottish country dancing instead of highland dancing. She tries to fill in the gaps in her cultural knowledge whenever she visits Scotland or her Scottish relatives visit her by exploring her cultural roots and questioning her relatives. Màirie's inability to speak Gaelic appears to contribute to her cultural disconnect and sense of cultural loss that we may interpret as a loss of her cultural anchor.

It is a feeling I share, with my incomplete knowledge of both Polish and Australian culture, which makes me feel as though I do not fully belong in either country. When I am in Poland I am perceived to be an Australian because I am not fully Polish since I was not born in Poland.

In Australia I identify with being Polish since I do not feel that I am fully Australian. Pollock and Van Reken describe this state of “in-between-ness” as belonging simultaneously “everywhere and nowhere” and contributing to feelings of restlessness and rootlessness (2009, p. 23). I often think these feelings are the reason that led me to accept a position where I am required to travel regularly to different countries. It helps quench my feelings of restlessness and rootlessness. Maybe that is why I enjoy travelling by plane so much. It feels like I am in a state of limbo suspended above the earth, similar to the state in which I find myself, perpetually living caught between two worlds. Interestingly, Hofstede does not see this as unique to people with a cross-cultural childhood. He says,

almost everyone belongs to a number of different groups and categories of people at the same time, people unavoidably carry several layers of mental programming within themselves, corresponding to different levels of culture. (Hofstede, 1991, p. 10 in Spencer-Oatey, 2012, p. 8)

He describes several cultural levels—national, regional, gender, generational, role, socioeconomic and organisational. If we accept this proposition, this poses a bigger question. What effect do these other levels of culture that Mario, Holly and Mairie experience have upon them? Can we view these levels of culture like the layers of an onion, each culture a skin enveloping the other to become a whole unit? Kevin Avruch states,

Culture is a ‘fuzzy’ concept unlikely to share identical attitudes, beliefs and so on, but rather show ‘family resemblances,’ with the result that there is no absolute set of features that can distinguish definitely one cultural group from another. (1998, pp. 18-20 in Spencer-Oatey, 2012, p. 10)

Is this fuzziness compounded by the idea of the diffusion of cultures involving borrowing from other cultures—just like Holly’s family and my husband does at Christmas (Risager, 2006, p. 41)? It brings us back to our earlier comment—a definition of culture is problematic while the narratives reveal that culture plays an important role in our sense of subjective self, relationality and the well-being of our lived body. In the next section we reflect on the importance of language and its relationship with connectedness and belonging, identity, and culture.

Language and being: Towards understanding self and others

Language is the foundation upon which relationships between people are built and the basis of communication that is a necessary and important component of interpersonal interactions. della Chiesa et al. (2012) state that, “Mastering a language can be a characteristic required for a person to be considered to be a member of a culture” (p. 26). Litowitz suggests that language is an important basis for our subjectivity as well as our intersubjectivity telling us that, “the unique properties of language provide the necessary conditions for both our individual identity (our subjectivity) and our intersubjective encounters with others” (2014, p. 309). These comments suggest acquiring a language helps to create a sense of belonging, facilitates shared meaning, and builds emotional ties among people in the group.

Inability to communicate in the language of a host community can lead to separation, isolation and marginalisation as we see in the case of Mario’s father, and to a lesser extent, Mario when he returns to visit his relatives in Italy. It is one of the reasons that the Australian government introduced a citizenship test in 2007 as part of its strategy to support the integration of new migrants into the country and promote social cohesion. The written test administered in English is designed to assess English language proficiency, with people applying for citizenship required to demonstrate a basic level of English in addition to knowledge of Australia and Australian citizenship (Dept. of Immigration and Border Protection, 2017).

Moving between countries sometimes necessitates learning another language, as is the case for Holly and Mario. Pollock and Van Reken consider the development of linguistic skills as one of the benefits of a cross-cultural childhood (2009, p. 118). Learning another language supports relationality and allows us to interact with people from different backgrounds, learn about other cultures and to function effectively in a new environment. This involves more than what we might first think. Pas writes, “that an immigrant’s entry into another language involves more than semantics because they often describe having to translate behaviour, values, thoughts, beliefs, even emotions” (2013, p. 64). She goes on to describe the concept of migrants having to translate “cultural scripts,” a term suggested by Anna Wierzbicka (1994) that emphasises the link between language and culture.

The ability to speak a language is an important aspect of the cross-cultural lived experience for Mario, Holly and even Mairie, who moves to Australia from Scotland. Mairie grows up in an English-speaking environment in Scotland. She arrives in Australia as a native English speaker and is accustomed to studying in English, achieving distinction in her studies. This might lead us to presume that language will pose no difficulties for her in Australia, although we find it is not the case. In fact, language is an important issue for her all her life. It begins with her mother speaking a different form of English from the people in Port Seton that differentiates her mother from her husband's family, and other villagers. As a child Mairie is aware that her mother's speech is different from other people in the village. She is caught in a predicament as her mother expects her to speak formal English but to get along with her friends she has to speak the local dialect that she has acquired by interacting with her friends and other people during her interactions in the village. She effectively grows up bilingual but is reprimanded by her mother if she does not speak her preferred form of the "King's English".

Mairie becomes very aware of the importance of language for acceptance and belonging and develops the ability to attune to different accents and ways of pronouncing words. She consciously listens for different accents and associates them with specific places and types of people, a reflection of the connection between spatiality, language and relationality. The way that Mairie compares the different forms of speaking English that she calls "languages" may suggest to us that she maintains a hierarchy of languages, where one language is more highly regarded and valued over another as discussed by Dina Mehmedbegović in her paper, "Insights into Attitudes to Multilingualism and Positioning of Languages in the UK Political Discourse" (2010, p. 7). This is mirrored in Hoffman's comment that she,

associate(s) the sounds of correctness with the social status of the speaker ... The class-linked notion that I transfer wholesale from Poland is that belonging to a "better" class of people is absolutely dependent on speaking a "better" language. (1989, p. 122)

The students at school in Australia notice that Mairie does not speak English in the same way as they do. This point of difference and their unfamiliarity with her strong Scottish accent results in teasing at school. With the same determination that Holly shows in her efforts to minimise difference and be accepted, Mairie, with the help of another girl, sets about learning to pronounce words using an Australian accent.

Language can act as both a facilitator and a barrier in building relationality. Our accents, the specific way we pronounce words when we speak a language even if we are fluent in it, can reveal to others that we are not part of the host community. Does this suggest that unless we speak a language exactly the same way as others, we can never be viewed as fully belonging? Is it because some people listen more to how we speak than what we say, hindering the development of relationality and understanding between people? Kate Averis seems to support this when she writes, “If language is the means by which the exile can assert a claim of belonging on their adopted culture, it can also be that which betrays them as a foreigner or exile” (2008, p. 10). Hoffman says,

Some of my high school peers accuse me of putting it (my accent) on in order to appear more “interesting”. In fact, I’d do anything to get rid of it, and when I’m alone, I practice sounds for which my speech organs have no intuition. (2008, p. 121)

This comment reminds us of Màirie practising an Australian accent with her friend at school. In her exposition of Claire Kramsch’s writings Averis mentions that, “it takes more than mere linguistic ability to be accepted as a native speaker into a certain linguistic community ... the non-native speaker must also rely on the willingness of the community to accept him/her therein” (2008, p. 9). Màirie eventually assimilates the Australian accent and, as an adult, sounds like other Australians yet when she is with people from Scotland, temporality and relationality come into play as she unconsciously reverts to her Scottish accent. It depends on the length of time that she spends speaking in this way before she reverts to her Australian way of speaking. I can relate to adopting accents as, particularly in my younger years, I noticed I would do this unconsciously when speaking with non-native English speakers and was always concerned that they did not think I was being disrespectful and mimicking them.

Mario feels the importance of language from an early age. He is born in Italy and his first language is Italian. It is the language spoken at home by his parents. He lives in Italy for the first eight years of his life before emigrating to Australia and he acquires the language naturally as children do by being immersed in it as they grow up. We can assume that as an 8-year-old he has enough fluency and language competence to communicate his needs and thoughts in Italian, albeit at the level of a young child. Mario does not talk about how he learned to speak English. We are told in the guide *How Young Children Learn English as another Language* by the British Council that,

Young children are natural language acquirers; they are self-motivated to pick up language without conscious learning, unlike adolescents and adults. They have the ability to imitate pronunciation and work out the rules for themselves. (Retrieved 2018, p. 2)

Perhaps he learns incidentally, as he does not mention if he receives any help at school or at home to learn English. It is not English though that poses the most problems for him in his life but his limited ability to speak Italian, as English becomes his dominant language and he struggles to retain the level of Italian he had when he came to Australia, as he begins to use the language less frequently.

His mother learns English and so Mario lives in a bilingual home as he continues to speak in Italian with his father, the only language that he knows. Our competence in a language seems to affect our self-confidence, reflected by Mario's comment that he feels inadequate and becomes frustrated when he cannot keep up with his grandmother's conversation. Hoffman echoes these feelings when she writes, "if one exists in the entropy of inarticulateness, that condition itself is bound to be an enraging frustration" (1989, p. 131).

Similarly, once Holly leaves home with the linguistic capability of an 11-year-old she receives no further tuition in the Korean language. She views language as an important vehicle for transmitting culture that is reflected in her choice to study Korean literature at school in Australia. She does not want to lose connection with the Korean culture and that part of her that she calls "Korean Holly". She is keen to understand and access the deeper subtleties, semantics, and nuances of Korean language. Pas, in her analysis of Hoffman's book *Lost in Translation*, describes her immigration from Poland to Canada, "as a journey between two languages" (2013, p. 74) and quotes Hoffman (2004), who says immigration involved, "a translation of the self into [a] new vernacular, into the new rhythms, the new music, the new cultural codes" (p. 69). Holly seems to share her views when she says language is a way of "absorbing culture". She says that she feels the students at school who have difficulty understanding her are not interested in becoming friends with her. This comment stresses the importance of language, not only for conveying meaning and communication, but for developing lived human relations.

My family and I sometimes say we speak “kitchen Polish” because we only discuss mundane matters in Polish and engage in more sophisticated discussions in English. It is a colloquial term to describe language used for basic conversation. This makes it easier for those of us who grew up in an English speaking country but effectively excludes my mother from participating in the conversation since she has not gained the proficiency required to engage in such conversations. It illustrates the communication difficulties children in cross-cultural situations can have with their parents even if they appear to be fluent in the language, and the potential for exclusion.

Mario speaks of his sadness that his father never acquaints himself with the man that he becomes because he cannot convey properly his adult thoughts and opinions. He feels that he remains a child in his father’s eyes. It is a source of great frustration for Mario and seems to inhibit his relationships with his relatives in Rome since he cannot express himself adequately or convey his personality, and build relationality—one of his main motives for returning to Italy.

Mario demonstrates how much emphasis he places on language maintenance by telling us he reads Roman guide books at home to practise Italian. I watch the Polish news on television, and view the Polish translations of Ted Talk presentations so I can continue to improve my Polish language skills in the absence of formal classes. Mario often considers joining an Italian language class such is his desire to improve his first language. The fact that he does not make greater efforts to improve his Italian while his father is alive remains an unresolved issue for him. Mario calls it an “emotional burden filled with sadness, regret and guilt”.

Mario does not just value the Italian language. He seems to value all languages and views language maintenance as an anchor to family and cultural heritage, similar to what Daniel describes as “the language of intimacy, of family and of safety” (2011, p. 136). He expresses his disapproval of schools that adopt a monolingual approach and require students to speak English all the time. I have a similar reaction when I visit international schools where there are students from many countries who speak a variety of languages and see signs stipulating “Speak English only”. Mario can see some positive aspects of the language barrier though and uses his ability to speak Italian to his advantage. He sometimes uses Italian to communicate with his wife, mother and friends if he wants to exclude others from the conversation, highlighting the importance of language for relationality.

An example of role reversal is when children in cross-cultural situations act as interpreters for their parents because their local language skills surpass that of their parents. This was often a role that my older sister was required to adopt at a linguistic and maturation level well above her chronological age when my mother had to deal with teachers or doctors. She tells me that she feels like she has supported our mother since the age of 6 and remembers helping to enrol me at primary school. The way she describes it suggests that she found the responsibility to be onerous. I recall being very sensitive to people's reactions to my mother's broken English, the word 'broken' suggesting something needs mending. We can question whether it is our attitude to those who do not speak English perfectly that requires mending or the person's ability to speak English. It sometimes resulted in my feeling embarrassed when my mother made grammatical errors especially in front of my friends during my adolescence when peer acceptance is very important.

Mario is shocked and surprised to hear himself call out in the Italian dialect when he thinks his young son is in danger. He does not speak to him in Italian at other times so his son probably does not even understand what he says. We might assume the manner that Mario speaks to him catches the boy's attention and alerts him that something is wrong since intonation and volume can convey meaning as well as words. In that moment of panic, it appears to be an instinctive reaction rather than a conscious thought to call out in Italian—seemingly emotion causes Mario's first language to come to the fore.

I had a similar reaction and was similarly surprised when, upon hearing some tragic news one day, I automatically reverted to praying in Polish as an unconscious reaction. My reaction seemed to reach the core of my being and confirmed to me what I had always perceived, that my language is rooted deeply in my Polish heritage. Whenever I recall that day, it again causes me to recite the same prayer in Polish. I observe that at times of extreme emotion I sometimes utter a word or two in Polish, seeming to ease or reflect the emotion more effectively than in English. Ingrid's husband says that he often hears her "sleep talking" in German yet they converse in English together and she rarely speaks German since her parents passed away. In a similar way to Mario, Ingrid and myself, Mairie lapses into her Scottish accent if she is angry suggesting that her "first language" is her affective language. It appears that the first language we learn remains deep within us no matter how often we speak or how competent we become in another language.

These examples may suggest to us that our first language is closely related to our subconscious and is triggered when we put aside our conscious thoughts. Daniel, who was born in Argentina to parents who were Hungarian immigrants and also lived in the United States and Hungary, acknowledges the affective and cognitive aspects of language when she writes, “I used to say that I think in English, I feel in Spanish but it’s me who speaks in Hungarian” (2011, p. 149). Perhaps Daniel is right and the reason that Mario and I reverted to our first languages was because our first language is our affective language.

We may consider it somewhat surprising given Mario’s strong sense of cultural heritage and his view of languages that he does not insist his children learn Italian. It seems to reflect a utilitarian view of language as he maintains that there is no need for his children to learn Italian since they can communicate with their grandparents in English. We may consider this as being somewhat at odds with his view of language as a cultural conduit or means of building connection. Perhaps his attitude is influenced by how language hampered his relationship with his father. The acquisition of English is one of Holly’s main reasons for leaving South Korea in addition to the goal of experiencing other cultures. Since Holly starts learning English at school in South Korea it is likely that she has a basic level of communication when she leaves to study in English in India. This does not seem to pose many problems for her, although she resents being required to speak English all the time.

Natpat Chanjavanakul tells us that motivation is one of the major factors determining success of second language learning and presents four motivational theories—stimulus appraisal, motivation and attention, self-determination, and mind-set theories (in della Chiesa et al., 2012, p. 80). Drawing on other scholarly work in his exposition of the four theories, he states that stimulus appraisal involves us responding to various stimuli that guide and affect our actions including, “Social cognition ... the ability to make assumptions about others’ intentions and about interpersonal issues” (p. 82). The motivation and attention theory suggests that second language learning needs to be relevant and challenging for students but not too stressful. He goes on to tell us that the self-determination theory includes intrinsic motivation based on, “an innate drive and emotional response to actively learn things ... social settings will promote intrinsic motivation when fulfilling three psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness” (p. 85). The mindset theory purports that a growth mindset helps to learn a second language founded on the view that there is scope for improvement.

Holly has two main motivations for improving her English language skills that seem to align with the stimulus appraisal and self-determination theories. She wants to do well in her studies and although she meets the school's language proficiency test before admission, she experiences language difficulties and cannot do as well in her studies as she feels she is capable of doing. She has to learn subject specific terms as well as grammar and vocabulary. Her second motivation to improve her English is to make friends. She wants to be able to communicate with other students at a level that expresses her personality and her opinions, like Mario with his father, and I with my mother.

Once she improves her English skills she senses a greater connectedness with her Australian friends and is grateful to the teachers at school who help her with her language development. Interestingly, she believes that she improves her language most by talking informally with other students outside of the classroom, and by her unsupervised writing in her diary that gives her the freedom to make mistakes and learn through trial and error. Yangguang Chen supports the view that, "informal learning pathways that appeal to students' interests and resemble day to day life have been playing a vital and complementary role in students' language learning" (2010, p. 7).

Holly is taken aback when she realises while she is speaking with her mother in South Korea, she is translating the conversation in her mind into English and dreams in English on occasions. Does this suggest that she has internalised language skills to the extent that English has replaced Korean or, as Hoffman evocatively writes, "Perhaps I've read, written, eaten enough words so that English now flows in my bloodstream" (1989, p. 243)? This is at odds with the way that the first language spontaneously and unconsciously manifests itself in Mario, Ingrid and myself during heightened periods of stress or relaxation. Holly has just reached adulthood at the time of our conversations. Perhaps in time she may revert to her first language during peaks times of emotion or English may become so internalised that it reflects her affective and cognitive state.

Màirie feels that her early exposure to different forms of speaking English results in her linguistic flexibility and adaptability, and an affinity for language learning. Numerous studies have supported the view that language learning has cognitive benefits with results showing a correlation between language learning and higher academic achievement (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997; Carr, 1994), increased linguistic awareness (Demont, 2001), and development of students'

reading abilities (D'Angiulli & Siegel, 2001). Further studies suggest that learning language skills helps to promote understanding of grammar (Cunningham & Graham, 2000) and the ability to hypothesise (Kessler & Quinn, 1980).

Màirie loves learning languages at school and becomes proficient in Latin and French. Competence in more than one language is now recognised as an essential 21st Century cross-cultural skill. Chen states that, “Being monolingual is now no longer an option, with bilingualism or multilingualism becoming the *sine qua non* of modern global citizenship” (2010, p. 7). Learning to speak English, widely considered as a key world language, provides Mario, Holly and Màirie with the ability to communicate on a global level. Mehmedbegović (2010) describes the ability to speak English as linguistic and cultural capital.

Màirie places great importance on language as a means of learning about Scottish culture and she views her inability to speak Gaelic as contributing to her disconnect with her cultural heritage that she appears to deeply regret. This reflects the concept of language as “cultural scripts” purported by Anna Wierzbicka (1994) and discussed by Pas, where immigrants and immigrant authors, “translate what is constituted by different societies’ ways of speaking that profoundly and systematically “reflect different cultural values”” (2013, p. 65). We can see in these narratives that language is central to the phenomenon of a cross-cultural childhood, and that it is closely intertwined with culture, relationality, and understanding of cultural norms and practices.

In summary, the key themes that emerge through this inquiry of the phenomenon of a cross-cultural childhood and that we explored in some depth in this chapter are our longing to belong, the development of identity, the effect of culture, and the importance of language. In this section we consider the apparent links between these four themes within the existential framework of temporality, spatiality, relationality, materiality and lived self. We see our need for belonging and connectedness can result in feelings of loss, anxiety, changing affiliation and self-identity, perceptions of feeling different and not belonging, and efforts to be accepted. The existential theme of relationality appears to play a significant role in the lived experience of a cross-cultural childhood as seen in the narratives, both on a personal and broader level. The desire for relationality in the new environment, and concern about loss of relationality with family and

friends in the home country seem to concern Mario, Holly and Màirie. The longing to belong and memories of lived human relations appears to affect each person.

Pollock and Van Reken state that a common effect of a cross-cultural experience is the adoption of an expanded world view by seeing at first-hand different ways that people live that suggests that our relationality extends beyond our family and people whom we know (2009, pp. 87-90). Holly is moved greatly by the poverty she sees in India and the way that some people live there. She declares, "It broke my heart". She experiences feelings of sorrow and guilt when she sees how little others have in their lives, including basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. It makes her feel very grateful for what she has in her life. Holly's friend Lara shares a similar view after seeing abject poverty in Africa. Her observations lead her to adopt the view that there are too many impoverished children in the world and that she will not bring any more children into it because there are many others who need her help. Lara's comments seem to suggest that she recognises the relationality between herself and people she has not met. She appears to see herself as a global citizen and accepts that she has a responsibility to assist other people who are less privileged than her. It is consistent with the view that, "Each member of the global society shares responsibility for upholding these basic human rights" (UNESCO 2005; Hinton in della Chiesa et al., 2012, p. 415).

Màirie develops a broad outlook and connection with other people across temporality and spatiality. She senses a strong intangible link with people who have experienced diaspora, particularly those who have lived through involuntary disconnection and alienation from their homelands. She seems to gain a heightened sense of empathy and compassion. She actively seeks to build her connections and understanding and she wants to explore other people's reactions. Is it because she had no chance to express her thoughts about leaving Scotland? Mario displays empathy by reaching out to others who, like him, have been disconnected from their country of birth. He strives to ease the transition process for them by offering friendship and support.

Identity is a constant theme in these life stories. All three reflect, interpret and re-interpret their self-perception and identity. This is consistent with van Manen's comment that, "As I make something of myself I may reinterpret who I once was or who I am now" (1990, p. 104). As they do this, Holly and Mario engage in self-objectifying, giving themselves names that reflect their

embodied understanding of their subjective selves in relation to spatiality and intersubjectivity with others like, “Korean Holly, Indian Holly, Australian Holly, Multicultural Holly” and, in the case of Mario, “ignorant Italian, arrogant Australian and balanced Ito-Italian”. In her interpretation of the literary work of Huston, Leimig writes that Huston believes childhood “forms the core of a person and serves as a constant companion in life” (2018, p. 5). She supports this statement by quoting Huston who writes, “childhood is like the stone at the heart of the fruit – the fruit does not become hollow as it grows! The flesh may swell and ripen and soften around it, but that does not make the stone go disappear” (2002, p. 8).

Might this suggest that we cannot disregard our inner self, formed during our childhood, during our eternal quest to articulate who we are? Hinton tells us, “In this global society, we each have multiple, overlapping identities, including loyalties to nations, regions and the globe” (2012, p. 415). Mario feels that when he identifies as being Australian he is rejecting his family—especially his father who is a very proud Roman—and his Italian heritage that he values highly. A major test of his allegiance and loyalty takes place when he applies for Australian citizenship so he can be eligible for a government position. Mario says that he does not know what he would have done if he had been required to renounce his Italian citizenship. It would appear from his comments that it would have been an extremely difficult decision for him.

We may ask if it is ethical to ask people to renounce their citizenship that is their given birthright. The Australian Constitution stipulates that federal members of Parliament must be Australian citizens and renounce their citizenship or right to citizenship of other countries. This caused political turmoil in 2017 as several politicians were discovered to have not forfeited their allegiance to, and right to citizenship, of other countries and had to stand down from their elected positions. Some cases were referred to the High Court of Australia for adjudication to determine the person’s citizenship status.

Taylor states, “Our identity is what allows us to define what is important to us and what is not” (1989, p. 30). It plays a role in orienting us and provides a framework within which things have meaning for us. We see that culture provides an important framework or horizon for Mario, Holly and Mairie with which they can relate to the world. Their narratives reveal it is of great importance to them to retain their cultural links and traditions. All mentioned feelings of

loss and regret at not being able to fully comprehend their first culture and losing aspects of it. It is a sentiment that I share when I see my family gradually letting go of some of the Polish traditions we grew up with. It feels like I am giving up a part of myself. All three appear to demonstrate personal qualities of adaptability as part of their acculturation, motivated variously by a desire to learn about other cultures, be accepted, and fit into the new environment, and their “social survival”. Holly is intentional about following the accepted cultural practices in India and Australia to the extent that she is prepared to adapt her behaviour in such a way that conflicts with the Korean concept of “being a lady” that she has been taught by her parents.

The narratives support the view that language is an important aspect of the cross-cultural experience. Language poses difficulties for Mario, Holly and Mairie during the transition period, and in building relationality, yet their exposure to new languages ultimately contributes to their personal development with each person developing an interest in languages. It also helps them to understand other people and cultures that correlates with the sentiments expressed by Cyrus Rolbin and Bruno della Chiesa,

although studying about the world in one’s native language is meaningful at least on an intellectual level, it alone cannot provide the experience of seeing, thinking, and feeling as people who speak other languages do. Becoming bilingual enables a person to relate on subtle levels of perception, cognition, and emotion to people who live within a different linguistic system. (2010, p. 197)

This inquiry reveals that there is a strong link between culture and language. Language is perceived as an important aspect of the ability to retain cultural ties that is reflected in both Mario’s and Holly’s narratives as they describe the importance they place on retaining their first language. They view language as a means of maintaining links with their home culture, while Mairie regrets her lack of knowledge of the Gaelic language. Perhaps she tries to make up for it by learning French and Latin at school that are more accessible to her in Tasmania. Language seems to be strongly linked with the concept of self. Hoffman shares with us the way language can affect who we become and our identity as she describes her feelings as she acquires English saying, “This language is beginning to invent another me” (1989, p. 121). She highlights the difficulty of trying to express herself in a language writing, “My speech I sense, sounds monotonous, deliberate, heavy—an aural mask that does not become me or express me at all ... I’ve lost the ability to make the sparks fly” (pp. 117-118).

We finish this chapter with a reflection on the powerful human emotion of regret. Rüdiger Bittner in his paper, “More than a Feeling: The Communicative Function of Regret” writes, “Regret is not a useless indulgence, but is rather a valuable and important way for us to navigate lives filled with epistemic hurdles, both within ourselves and between ourselves and other people” (2017, p. 29). He quotes Amelie Rorty (1980) who describes the affective aspect of regret as, “characteristically felt as a particular sort of painful feeling, a pang, a stab, waves of stabs” (p. 15). He goes on to distinguish between first-personal regret where our actions cause a bad outcome and third-personal regret about an outcome for which we are not responsible. Is Holly warding off regret by studying Korean and potentially avoiding suffering first-personal regret as Mario seems to experience? Bittner discloses that regret often is perceived as a negative emotion yet he suggests it can be a positive one since, “Regret has first-personal communicative value because it indicates when one’s selves are out of alignment and can consequently provide the impetus for bringing them back into alignment” (p. 25). Might we view Mario’s desire to take up Italian classes as a response to his regret that may lead to his alignment and help him to overcome feeling this way? To a lesser degree perhaps this is what Mairie is doing when she quizzes her Scottish relatives about Gaelic words.

In this chapter we have drawn on the life stories of Mario, Holly and Mairie and reflected in some depth on the themes that emerge in this inquiry particularly identity that is a central aspect of the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon, and language that facilitates a sense of belonging and understanding of culture viewed through the lens of an existential framework. The next and final chapter of this thesis provides an overview of the effect of the lived cross-cultural experience on each person and their perspectives on their life stories.

Chapter 9 – *TĖSKNOTA*, NOSTALGIA AND REDEMPTION

The moment we are born we embark on our own unique life journey. Our embodied self moves through time and space, a subjective being engaging with the physical world and intersubjectively with others in our longing for relationality. We sail uncharted waters as our lives fill with unpredictable events, twists and turns, which inspire us, challenge us—and shape us. Those of us with a cross-cultural childhood have lived experiences that are distinct from those who have spent their childhood living in one country. In this inquiry, we have reflected on the lived experiences of Mario, Holly and Mairie with the intention of trying to deepen our understanding of, “How does it feel to have experienced a cross-cultural childhood?”

We have followed each individual life story from migration to transition, and eventual re-involvement in a new country. Incorporating the existential theme of temporality, we see that a cross-cultural childhood involves considerable shifts in spatiality, relationality and materiality with a significant effect on the embodied self. van Manen reminds us,

Whatever I have encountered in my past now sticks to me as memories or as (near) forgotten experiences that somehow leave their traces on my being—the way I carry myself (hopeful or confident, defeated or worn-out), the gestures I have adopted and made my own (my mother, father, teacher, friend) and the language that ties me to my past (family, school, ethnicity), and so forth. (1990, p. 104)

We see different stages of the lived experience of a cross-cultural childhood can elicit various emotions and responses, both positive and negative. Some reactions and feelings are specific to one person, others are shared, corresponding with insights gained through our consideration of

the life stories and writings of Hoffman, Huston, Obama, Heiss and fictional characters like Anna K. and other persons whom I encountered as part of this research.

The persons who are the focus of this inquiry differ in age, gender and country of birth. The period of their respective migrations spans 60 years taking place in approximately 20-year intervals. Mairie migrates in the late 1950s, Mario arrives in Australia in the 1980s and Holly begins her cross-cultural journey at the start of the 21st Century, each of them encountering different social, political and economic landscapes into which they enter and try to establish themselves. Holly is the only person out of the three people who voluntarily embraces the opportunity to live in another country. Mario and Mairie follow their parents and have no say in the decision to leave their country of birth. While their migration to Australia is a permanent move, Holly is a temporary immigrant and perhaps this transience influences her attitude. She appears to display least resistance to moving away from home. We may wonder if Holly would have been equally receptive to the idea if she thought it was going to be a permanent separation from the country of her birth and childhood.

Interestingly, in the Japanese language two different words are used to describe people who have had a cross-cultural experience. *Kaigaishijos* is the name given to people while living abroad and *Kikokushijos* is the word used to describe them after they return to Japan (Cottrell in Bell-Villada et al., 2011, p. 57; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 279). Both terms imply that a cross-cultural experience is a transformative one. Mario, Holly and Mairie's narratives reveal that in different ways and to different extents their cross-cultural lived experiences seem to affect their personal development, attitudes, life choices and actions.

Mario and Mairie emigrate with their families and therefore all members of the family are dealing with, and responding individually, to the change in spatiality and perhaps do not notice the effect on themselves or each other. Holly's changes appear to be more noticeable to her parents, family and friends in South Korea. Like a child whose physical changes as they grow are not immediately apparent to those who see them every day, the time between visits to South Korea may have accentuated Holly's changes. Might this also be because Holly is the only person in her family to live in another country and have first-hand experience of living in another culture while the other family members' lives continue much as they have always done in South

Korea? The changes initially are not evident to Holly until they are pointed out to her by comments such as, “You never used to be like that”, and, “You have changed”. This causes her to reflect on her own behaviour and agree that indeed she has changed.

Her parents begin recognising small changes in her that at first they do not seem to mind because of their apparent international orientation. Over time though, they start to notice greater changes. Her father’s question, “Where is my daughter?” acknowledges the extent that he perceives she has changed. How much of this may be due to the fact that she has matured and is no longer a child but a young woman? Is there a hint of regret that he encouraged her to study abroad when he poses this question? Are the effects of her cross-cultural experiences more than he had anticipated? Does he worry about his relationship with his daughter since she is no longer the girl he remembers?

Mario recognises he has changed as he traces the shifts in his self-identification and self-perception vacillating between Italian and Australian. He finally determines that he is “an evolving person” as his embodied understanding of self continues to develop in response to his lived experiences, interpretation and re-interpretation. Mairie thinks she was “tamed” in Australia after running freely with the village gang in Scotland. Her lived experiences appear to help her to develop empathy for others and respect for the intrinsic value of all people. Like Mario, her reflections about her cross-cultural experiences lead her to develop an embodied understanding of herself as being altered and shaped by her cross-cultural childhood.

Mario, Holly and Mairie’s narratives suggest that each person finds their cross-cultural childhood experience to be an intense emotional journey filled with opportunities, challenges, gains, losses, pain, joy and a never-ending personal quest to find themselves and a sense of belonging. We can gain an appreciation of the degree of pain Mairie feels when she says she was “saved by her niece” who is just a baby when she joins her on the journey to Australia. It seems that Mairie experiences a great wound when she is wrenched from Scotland against her will and her choice of words illustrate the depth of the wound. The love she has for her baby niece is great and it helps her to overcome the pain she is feeling. Love and relationality appear to transcend the pain of separation. Her parents’ decision to emigrate to Australia brings joy and pain as Mairie is reunited with her beloved father yet it affects her relationship with her mother

that only is resolved late in life when reconciliation seems to heal the relationship caused by her being uprooted from Port Seton. Might we also view it as helping to reconcile the mixed emotions that Mairie feels about her life—the losses, the pains, the gains? Mario's second visit to Italy appears to lead to his reconciliation with his family and his disconnection from Italy after a somewhat tense first visit when he feels distanced from his family. Holly says she is anxious about returning to live in South Korea. We may anticipate that she will need to reconcile the person she has become due to changes she experienced while living abroad as she picks up the strands of her life again back in her home country.

Longing appears to be a feature of the cross-cultural experience for Mario, Holly and Mairie. Mario speaks about his longing to return to live in Italy again, at least on a temporary basis. Might the search for what he perceives he lost be driving his urge to live there again? Mairie speaks of longing for Scotland, the Gaelic language and Scottish culture. So great is her longing that, at one time, she considers leaving her husband in Australia and returning to live in Scotland. Holly longs to be accepted by the other girls at school in India and Australia. She longs to retain her Korean language and her links with the Korean culture. She longs to be able to fit in on her return to South Korea. Mario and Mairie long to know what their lives might have been like if they had remained in their country of birth. Longing in Mario, Holly and Mairie's narratives appears to be linked to feelings of loss, or concern about the potential for loss, like Hoffman who writes, "Underneath my carefully trained serenity, there's a caldron of seething lost loves and a rage at loss" (1989, p. 139). She goes on to say that her sense of loss manifests itself as, "nostalgia, *teskenota*—a word that adds to nostalgia the tonalities of sadness and longing," (p. 4) that is,

compounded by the fact that Loss is a magical preservative. Time stops at the point of severance, and no subsequent impressions muddy the picture you have in your mind. The house, the garden, the country you have lost remain forever as you remember them. Nostalgia - that most lyrical of feelings - crystallizes around those images like amber. Arrested within it, the house, the past, is clear, vividly made more beautiful by the medium in which it is held and by its stillness. (p. 114)

Is this the reason Mario and Mairie find it difficult to let go of their longing for the country of their birth and childhood? Are these frozen aspects of their lives perceived as more beautiful than they were in reality, and perceived as more beautiful than the reality of their present lives? Will this longing continue to be ever-present in their lives as the embodied self responds to

unexpected stimuli like a sound, taste or smell that triggers a memory and, “a sudden nostalgia, as for a love one has almost forgotten to mourn” (Hoffman, 1989, p. 171)?

What exactly is it that those of us who have experienced a cross-cultural childhood are missing? What do we seem to be longing and looking for? Is it perhaps a sense of wholeness that Todres suggests as he writes, “It is as if each of us is formed as a passionate question, an incompleteness that lives with us and to which we respond” (2007, p. 116)? If so, do we have any hope of finding wholeness and ending our constant search so we can gain inner calm and peace? Todres goes on to suggest that our efforts may be in vain as he writes, “The sense of loss at the centre of the specialised self-concept motivates a search for wholeness. But the search for wholeness is sought by specialized perception; a futile and reductionist quest” (2007, p. 136).

The loss, longing and pain that all three narratives in this inquiry reveal, albeit in different ways and to different degrees, seem to reflect the view of Todres that “there is simply a vulnerability given with the human condition” (2004, p. 4). If this is the case, should we feel despondent or perturbed? Not according to Todres who sheds a positive light on it saying that, “The body affirms the hungry longing and quivering vulnerability as the human space of welcome” (2004, p. 16). He proposes the notion of “soulful space” and views our human vulnerability as a gift. He describes it as “a gift of wound” and a “wound of longing” that provides a spaciousness that also “let’s in”. He goes on to state that, “there is also the acknowledgement that living forward means separations and bindings, so there is also pain – a beautiful pain in living forward and giving up what we have embodied. This beautiful wound is the human realm” (2004, p. 9).

The interplay of the existential themes of temporality, spatiality and relationality seem to come into effect in these longings—longing to develop lived human relations, longing for the place that once was home, and longing to return to a time where matters related to belonging, identity, culture and language appear to have been simpler. Todres proposes that we are not alone in our longings as, “The treasure of the wound of longing is the taste of beauty and poignancy of human participation, the essence of relationship, the ‘we-feeling’ in mutual vulnerability” (2004, p. 10). We may contemplate whether assuaging these longings will result in

a greater sense of happiness and well-being. Jack Bauer, Dan McAdams and Jennifer Pals in their article, “Narrative Identity and Eudaimonic Well-being” write,

Where there is happiness there is always a subjective interpretation of conditions as good or bad, desirable and undesirable ... But ultimately happiness is a subjective appraisal of one’s life as happy. From this perspective, happiness itself should be intertwined with a person’s subjective understanding of who he or she is or what his or her life means. (2008, pp. 81-81)

They go on to tell us that, “Eudaimonic well-being also involves pleasure but emphasizes meaningfulness and growth—a more enduring sort of happiness,” (p. 83). After appraising their life stories, Mario, Holly and Mairie decide that despite their continued longings, they have gained more than they have lost. Their comments suggest that Mario, Holly and Mairie have adopted a redemption sequence proposed by Dan McAdams and Philip Bowman (2001) where a negative situation or set of circumstances are deemed to have resulted in a positive growth sequence. Mario says his cross-cultural experiences have enriched his life even though he acknowledges, “It’s an ache. It’s complicated”. Holly values her cross-cultural experiences as “as a gift” that she seems to cherish and perceives she has gained many benefits from her lived experience. Mairie says that it, “formed part of who I have become ... I like the place I have arrived. It has been a very painful but illuminating experience”. She values the opportunities and is extremely grateful for what she has gained. She maintains that she would not have achieved as much in her life without it.

As we reflect on each of the life stories, and as I reflect on my own personal cross-cultural journey, we expose our vulnerabilities by recalling and reliving our memories, akin to opening a Pandora’s box that reveals,

the ‘wound of earth’, of walking *this* path rather than *that* path, of loss and the possibility of not-being, of physical pain and the pain of not being at home, of being thrown into this circumstance, culture and time, of being situated and defined by self, body, others, language and culture. (Todes, 2007, p. 116)

Yet we see it can lead to us discovering the treasure within ourselves, others, and the world that we may not otherwise have uncovered—and the gaining of a certain kind of wisdom through self-redemption.

Anthem, Leonard Cohen



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wRYjtvIYK0&sns=em>

The birds they sang
At the break of day
Start again
I heard them say
Don't dwell on what
Has passed away
Or what is yet to be

Yeah the wars they will
Be fought again
The holy dove
She will be caught again
Bought and sold
And bought again
The dove is never free

Ring the bells (ring the bells) that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack in everything (there is a crack in everything)
That's how the light gets in

We asked for signs
The signs were sent
The birth betrayed

The marriage spent
Yeah the widowhood
Of every government
Signs for all to see

I can't run no more
With that lawless crowd
While the killers in high places
Say their prayers out loud
But they've summoned, they've summoned up
A thundercloud
And they're going to hear from me ...

You can add up the parts
You won't have the sum
You can strike up the march
There is no drum
Every heart, every heart to love will come
But like a refugee ...

Ring the bells that still can ring (ring the bells that still can ring)
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything (there is a crack in everything)...
That's how the light gets in

Anthem is one of my favourite songs by Cohen because of its evocative music, poetic beauty and significance of the words. There are many elements of this song that seem to correspond with aspects of the lived experience of a cross-cultural childhood. The English Oxford Living Dictionary describes an anthem as, “A rousing or uplifting song identified with a particular group, body, or cause” (2017). The title of the song seems apt within the context of this thesis as it can be considered to be a song for all of us who have experienced a cross-cultural childhood. The words, “There is a crack, a crack in everything ... That's how the light gets in,” remind us that nothing is perfect in this world but that is through the challenges that we face in our lives that we can find opportunities to grow.

We see in the life narratives contained in this thesis that the phenomenon of a cross-cultural childhood poses challenges and difficulties, yet those who generously shared their life stories with us view it as having enriched their lives. It helps them to gain new insights and ways of knowing and being as a result of this experience. A sense of hope permeates the song with the call to

Start again
I heard them say
Don't dwell on what
Has passed away
Or what is yet to be

An anthem also is defined as, “A musical setting of a religious text to be sung by a choir” (English Oxford Living Dictionary, 2017). The musical arrangement of this song evokes a sense of solemnity, reminiscent of a hymn. This is reinforced by the opening scene of the video in which Cohen recites the words of the song with the reverence of a prayer. It helps to generate the mood of the song and focus our attention on the lyrics and their meaning. The call to “Ring the bells that still can ring” reminds us of church bells and contributes to the sense of sacredness and prayer.

We may view the reference to wars, betrayal, government and refugees as reflecting some of the causes of the diasporic movement of people. The flight of birds that feature in this video may be interpreted as an analogy of migration that often results in a cross-cultural experience. Perhaps we can construe the visual images of the birds soaring in the sky as a symbol of the kind of freedom that is achieved following the gaining of wholeness once a person has redeemed elements of himself or herself after experiencing a cross-cultural childhood, to finally arrive at a secure and welcoming place where, “Every heart, every heart to love will come”.

In finishing our consideration of the cross-cultural childhood phenomenon, we come to comprehend this lived experience as a range of emotions disclosed to us during different stages of the cross-cultural journey. It leads to deep reflections about identity, and changing notions of self, linked to historicity as well as personal experiences. Language becomes a significant factor in relation to belonging and connectedness, and culture. The search for self appears to be never-

ending within the concept of our incompleteness, that all of us experience but that is more heightened as an integral part of the cross-cultural childhood. Awareness of our incompleteness, and acceptance of the “gift of wound” it creates, allows us to have a fuller understanding of ourselves and an opportunity to grow. The significance of this research is that it helps those of us who have experienced this phenomenon to be more aware of our emotions, and the opportunities and challenges it brings that foster self-understanding. This research also helps to develop empathetic resonance in those of us who have not shared this lived experience allowing us to better understand and support persons with a cross-cultural childhood.

There is scope for further research to develop our understanding of the enduring effects of cross-cultural life-world transitions, particularly of Indigenous Australians due to the intergenerational effects of colonisation. Donald (2011) suggests this could take the form of “Indigenous Métissage [that] requires hermeneutic imagination directed towards the telling of a story that belies colonial frontier logics and fosters decolonizing” (p. 1). Ng-A-Fook and Bryan Smith (2017) tell us, “An ethical encounter with the past, as we understand it, involves the affective processes of relating to others’ lived experiences and histories ... and can in part enable us to address such irreconcilable relational divides with the past” (p. 74). Other fertile areas for further research related to this thesis are refugees who fled their homes in difficult and often life-threatening situations and people from diverse racial groups and religions such as the Middle East and Africa. Such additional research has the potential to inform education through consideration of the implications on curriculum, teacher training, transition programs and support program for students and adults who have experienced a cross-cultural childhood.

EPILOGUE

May 2016

It is my last day in Poland after another trip to my mother's homeland from where she has been exiled for 74 years. It is a warm spring day as I wander the streets of "*Stare Miasto*", the Old Town of Warsaw, before I return to Australia. The sun is shining but my heart is heavy and I have tears in my eyes as I prepare to leave.

I hear the hooves of the horses pulling the carriage along the cobbled streets among the colourful narrow old buildings. The smell of *goląbki*, cabbage rolls, *pierogi*, dumplings, and *pierniki*, poppy seed cakes is wafting from the cafes. I see the *Zamek Królewski*, Royal Castle, and remember the grand old days of Poland. I hear someone in the plaza playing a traditional Polish song on the piano accordion and I want to dance the *Polonez*. I touch the tomb of the *Grób Nieznanego Żołnierza*, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and cry at the senselessness of war and the pain it has caused my family and my ancestral homeland.

I breathe the fresh clean air as I walk through the *Park Łazienkowski*, Łazienkowski Park and look at the *sosny*, pine trees regarding me as they have viewed for generations of people walking there. I see the great *Wisła Rzeką*, Vistula River, that once flowed red with Polish blood when Poland was under seige. I remember the spirit of the people in the face of adversity and the words of the Polish national anthem, *Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła póki my żyjemy*, Poland has not yet disappeared while we are still alive.

I follow the road, *Nowy Świat*, New World, a little further and as the church bells ring I enter one more time into the *Bazylika Świętego Krzyża*, Basilica of the Holy Cross, to say a final prayer. I stop at a plaque commemorating the great Polish composer Frédéric Chopin who in 1849 on his death bed in Paris requested that his heart be returned to Poland. It is in this church that his heart resides. The cause of his death is uncertain but in the words of Culture Minister Bogdan Zdrojewski, “We in Poland often say that Chopin died longing for his homeland” (Tsioulcas, 2014).

I share the love of Poland and I know the longing. It is a love and a longing that I understand and accept now that I have travelled the journey and reflected deeply since I first encountered the deer on the backroads of Poland many years ago. Now I know who I am, and why I am, the way I am. I buy a red heart shaped Christmas ornament at one of the souvenir shops that becomes a symbol of my own Polish heart to take back to Australia, to the other country that I love. I will miss Poland but the call is never-ending and I will be back to find another part of me next time.

Frédéric Chopin Nocturne C sharp minor by Arjen Seinen From “The Pianist”



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aS4YDuTfj7Y&&sns=em>

This video is from the 1992 movie *The Pianist* that is based on the true story of *Władysław Szpilman*, a Polish born Jewish pianist and composer, who survived the German invasion of Poland during World War II. The movie was co-produced and directed by Polish born Roman

Polanski. I selected this video for its close correlation with my historicity as well as the breathtakingly beautiful music.

The video depicts the encounter between Szpilman and a German officer who finds him scavenging for food in the ruins of homes following his escape from the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw. It reminds me of the occupation of Poland that resulted in the deportation of my mother to Germany and that ultimately led to my cross-cultural childhood. It is an intensely moving scene that in the movie is followed by the officer helping Szpilman to survive the holocaust. We might ask what prompted the officer to help Szpilman. Was it because he knew the Russians were approaching and the German occupation of Poland was coming to an end? Was his heart touched at seeing another human being in such a desperate and pitiful condition scrounging for food? Or was he simply moved by the purity of the music that shines through the horror of war?

This awe-inspiring composition by Chopin touches my heart and spirit and moves me powerfully by its sheer musical beauty. It conjures memories of my family's experiences in World War II. It leaves a lingering sadness for my mother and a *tesknota*, nostalgia, for the home of my cultural heritage, just as Chopin, who felt a deep longing for his homeland that resulted in his deathbed request to have his heart returned to Poland. As the final piece of music in this thesis, it draws together the strands of my life story and the strings of my heart.

APPENDIX 1

Accessing QR Codes

To view the videos using the QR codes included in this thesis, the reader will need to follow the instructions below using a mobile phone or tablet if the phone or tablet does not have a QR scanner already installed.

1. Go to the App. Store
2. Click the search icon at the bottom of the page
3. Type QR code scanner into the Search bar
4. Select “GET” for the preferred free QR code scanner app. from the list that appears on the screen
5. Click “Install”
6. Sign in with your personal App. Store ID
7. The App. will automatically download
8. Once the download is completed, click “Open”
9. Hold the square that appears on the screen of the mobile phone or tablet in front of the QR code on the page until you hear a click that indicates that the code has been scanned
10. A link to the video will appear automatically on the screen
11. Tap the screen to unmute and play the video

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